



ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY



Mortal KOMBAT 4
EGM's First Hands-On Report

**Inside!
Over 100
games**

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Fantastic Four • Madden 64

Gex 2 • Final Fantasy VII

Deathtrap Dungeon • Croc

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Issue 99

October, 1997
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By Ken Williams, Managing Editor - ken_williams@ed.com

- Halloween tricks and treats...
- Industry changes tune...
- A new era of gaming...
- A special thanks...

Trick or treat! BOO! Were you scared? Probably not. Nowadays it's hard to frighten die-hard gamers thanks to a huge, desensitizing influx of horrific, gory games. Titles like Resident Evil, Nightmare Creatures, Clock Tower, Enemy Zero and Castlevania: Symphony of the Night all promote and glorify gore, horror and the basics of human dismemberment. Is this the culmination of years of video game censorship finally being relaxed? Well if so, it couldn't have come at a better time, because this Halloween will be full of chills and thrills from beyond the grave. What would be more fun than curling up with Clock Tower at 1 a.m., in the dark, with all traces of ambient sounds muffled by your screams as you round the corner right into Scissorman? That's the stuff nightmares are made of. Take a look at this month's Halloween feature to get a ghastly gander at this year's scariest.

2-D Revisited

For months, awesome games like Mega Man 8 and X4 were given the shaft for being old and two-dimensional. Now—surprise!—2-D games dominate the new release charts, like Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee, Herc's Adventures and Castlevania: Symphony of the Night. True 3-D games are rare this holiday season, as the industry takes a step back and realizes that 2-D isn't dead—not by a long shot. In fact, you can count the new 3-D titles—mostly for the Nintendo 64—on your fingers.

Softer Censors?

Another noticeable aspect of the gaming evolution is censorship, or the softening thereof. Games like Final Fantasy VII and Wild Arms now contain mild profanities. These characters really talk trash! The fact that this dialog has made it into the production U.S. version of FFVII is a subtle, if not significant victory for anti-censorship. It's not a stretch to forecast that as

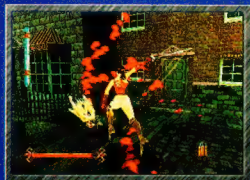


Previously rejected, Mega Man X4 will finally be released for the PlayStation.

game screen resolutions improve, and a butt-crack looks more like a butt-crack, that we'll soon be dealing with issues of nudity. Still, it should be no surprise that the industry's shifting gears and revving up for the future. As technology races forward, so must the developers, marketers, gamers and media.

Chasing the "Edge"

As game developers continue to push the envelope, we, as a magazine covering the industry, understand and endorse the need for change. Change is good. And in four short weeks, you'll be holding the most evolved video game reporting vehicle of all time—our 100th issue. In all these years with *EGM*, I never thought I'd be around to witness this event, let alone write the last two-digit editorial. I've had the ultimate pleasure of working with the most dedicated bunch of gamer/editors I've ever known, from Steve Harris, Ed Semrad, Martin Alessi, John Stockhausen, Terry Minnich and Sushi-X, right up to the new brilliant staff of writers: Joe Funk, Crispin Boyer, Dan Hsu, Shawn Smith, Kraig Kujawa, John Ricciardi, Kelly Rickards, Scott Parus and Dean Hager, not to mention all the other staff members working behind the scenes, like our art directors, copy-editors, circulation and administration staffs. The hard work of these individuals, and the support of you, the reader, has made the past 99 issues a joy to create. At this crossroads, I am proud, yet sad, to close the doors on one era of *EGM*, and look ahead to the future...Thanks everyone!



The '90s have produced some scary titles, and this year is no exception.



As the industry looks ahead to the future, so will we. Prepare yourself...

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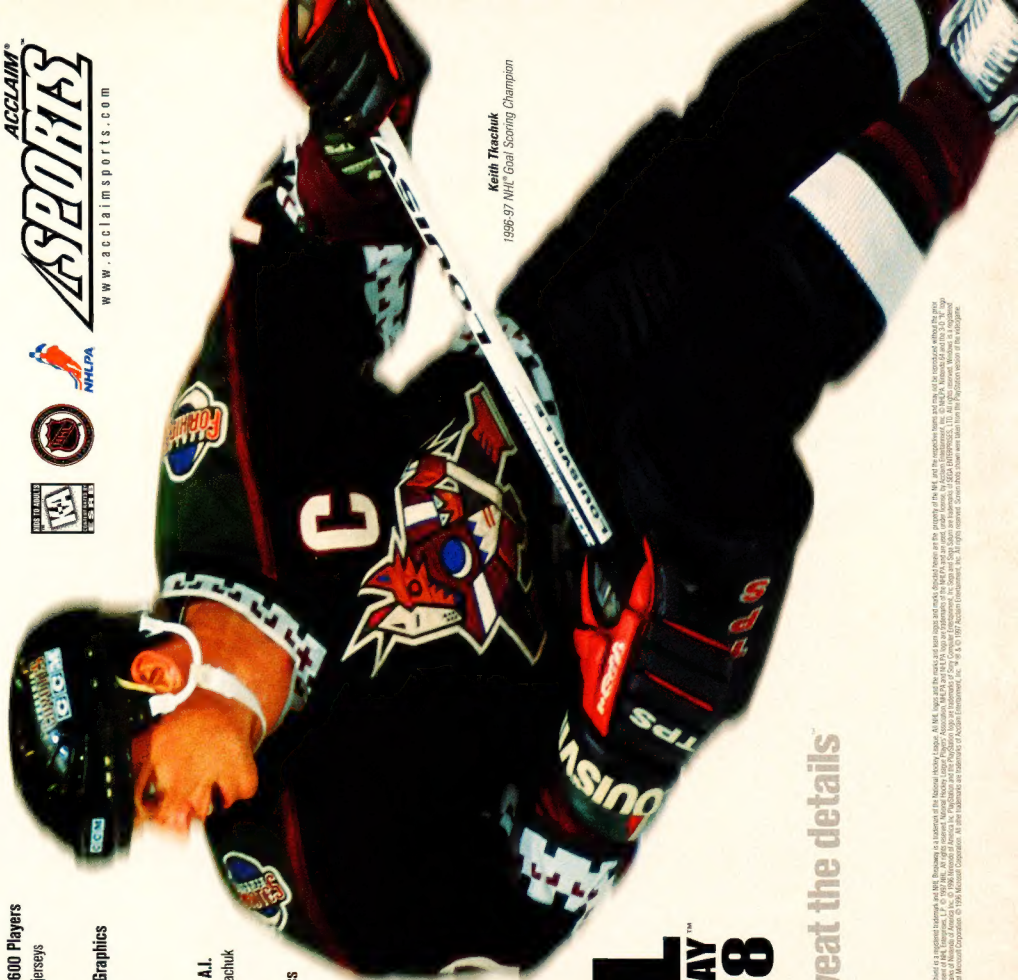
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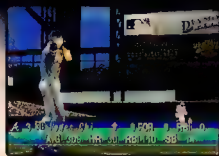
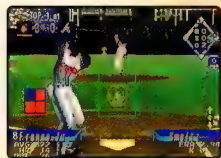
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NUMBER

THE FOURTH
INSTALLMENT
OF MORTAL
KOMBAT
MAKES
ITS WAY TO
THE ARCADES
3-D STYLE.
CHECK OUT
THE LATEST
INFO
STARTING ON
PAGE 114.



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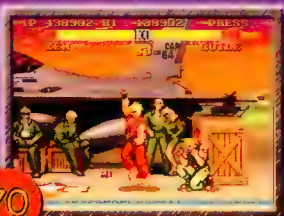
Reader asks: Do we really need to see urine to have a good time?

BONUS INSIDE

FREE POSTER

CELEBRATE OUR 100TH ISSUE! Packed into this issue of EGM is **PART TWO** of our **100 ISSUES-OF-EGM-COVERS** poster! Reminisce over which game(s) made it on to the cover as well as which games were crowned #1 by the Review Crew!

THIS MONTH



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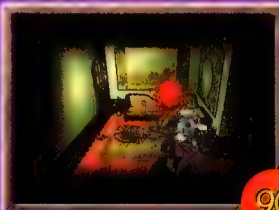
GAMERS TAKE A LICKIN' WHILE THE AI KEEPS ON TICKIN'

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been with us in one form or another for 20 years. But in all of this time, has AI in gaming improved as much as it should have? *EGM* takes a look at two genres of games (sports and fighting) in order to answer this question (and many others). In the end, you'll know more about how games think, and if they're getting any smarter. Turn to page 70 and get inside the head of some of gaming's most popular titles.

THINGS THAT GO BUMP ON YOUR GAME SYSTEM

Just like those old '50s movies where they pit the Wolfman against Dracula, in our Halloween feature, we pit some of the scariest video game characters against one another. For example, what if the hordes of *Resident Evil* fought against the armies of *Nightmare Creatures*? The fear-inducing characters go toe-to-toe on page 90.

"Resident Evil has a weak link: the slow and predictable zombies."



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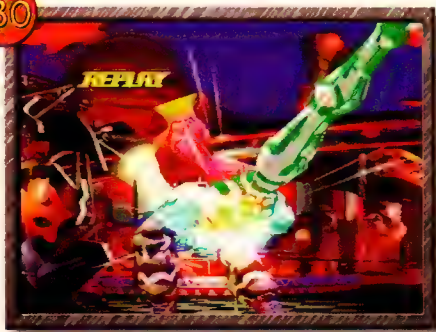
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GO 24 HOURS ON THE NET WITH AN EDITOR

Associate editor Shawn Smith spent 24 hours surfing the Net for video game-related info...among other things. From chat rooms to company sites, Shawn scoped them all out. And what did he find after 24 hours (besides neat lack-of-sleep-induced hallucinations)? Well, you'll have to check it out...the story is on page 106.

"What freak would go [online] for 24 hours straight?"

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STREET FIGHTER EX+α

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**BESIDES DANGER
AND INTRIGUE,
TREASURES
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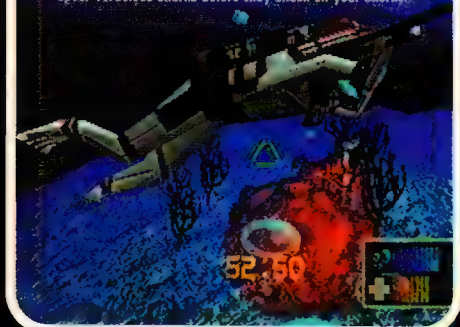
Your underwater hardware is 100% high-tech: robotic vehicles, homing torpedoes and heat seeking mines are all at your disposal.

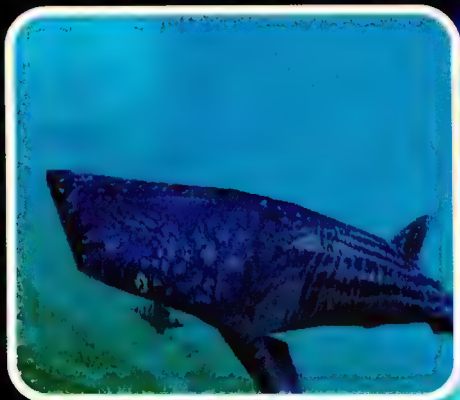
ACTION AND

14 treasure-hunting missions, including Antarctica, the Bermuda Triangle and the sunken Aztec ruins off the Yucatan Peninsula.

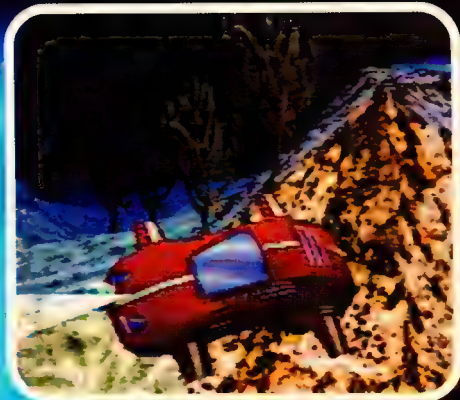


Blow up enemy subs, battle stealthy frogmen assassins and spear voracious sharks before they snack on your snorke!





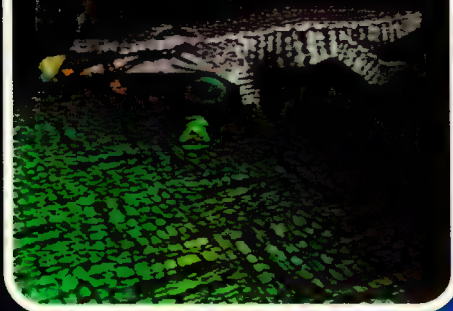
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by Todd Mowatt
todd_mowatt@zd.com
THE BEST VIDEO GAME NEWS

PRESS

START

MESSIAH: THE SECOND COMING OF PERFECT POLYGONS

DAVID PERRY HOPES TO SHINE ONCE AGAIN

David Perry, president of Shiny Entertainment, and his various teams of employees have been pushing the envelope in terms of game design and innovation. They haven't been afraid of trying new things. He and his Shiny Entertainment team have been at the forefront of new gaming technologies over the last four years.

Now, ironically enough, he and his team have come up with a new technology called "RT-DAT" (Realtime Deformation and Tessellation) Engine.

Messiah is the first game to use the new technology. It will be released for the PC and the PlayStation under Interplay. Shiny's parent company sometime in the first quarter of

IT RUNS by changing the exact number of polygons on screen in realtime."

This technology will effectively keep the game running smoothly.

"Games get all choppy when their speeds go up and down, and that affects gameplay and makes it frustrating. In some games when you turn your character around in one spot, the game speeds up and slows down, and that's irritating. This technology will alleviate that."

"In Messiah, instead of boxy-looking characters, this technology will allow for real smooth breasts and real smooth backsides, and you will also see the skin stretch and the body move. That will be done in software and

The story line for the game isn't anywhere near complete, but here are some preliminary screen shots of Messiah.

1998. The Messiah technology allows for realtime tessellation, which means scaling polygons in realtime. The technology will allow for 1,000 times more polygons, resulting in amazingly lifelike characters on screen and will have realtime deformation and interpolation as well as volumetric lighting, according to David Perry.

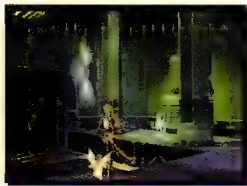
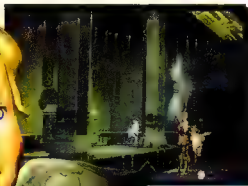
"It's basically a very intelligent breakdown of the characters to polygons," Perry explained. "We can decide the speed of the game AS

not actually be some cheat or animation. That is the software saying that if your butt was to move up a little bit then the cheek would compress. That's the type of real movement we are looking for. We have built-in tools to tell each little piece of the skin's surface how it should react to different movements and that's what makes this technology exciting."

Messiah's RT-DAT technology would make Lara Croft look about 7000 times better, according to Perry.

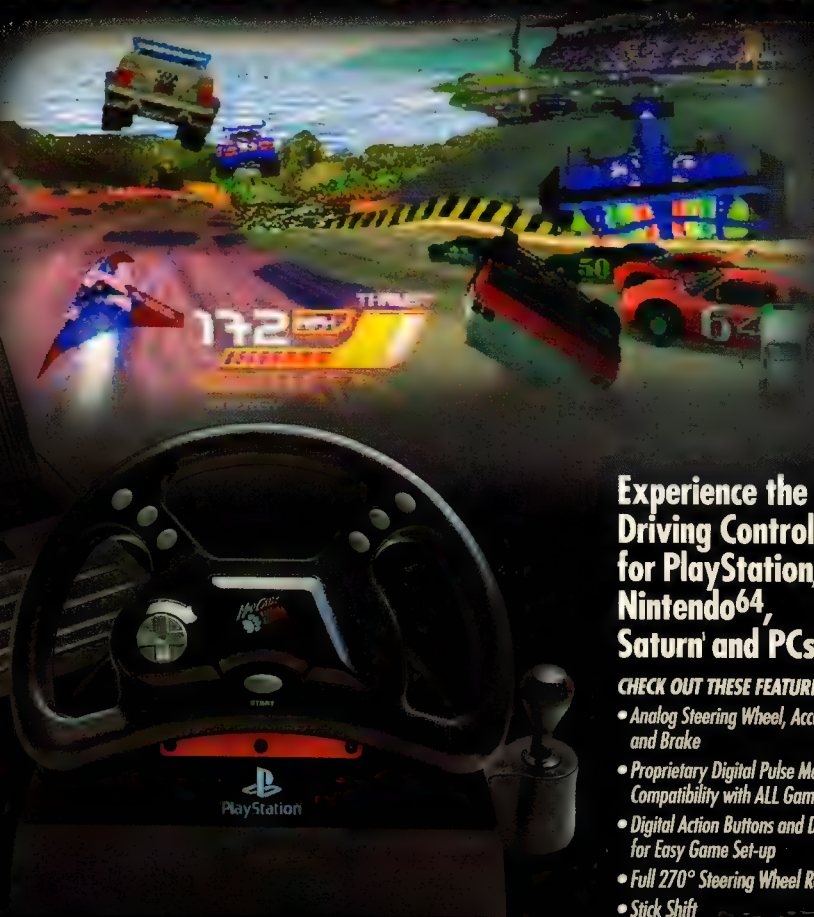
"The other thing that it does is the meshing of polygons. For example, in games like Toshinden, on the joints of the characters you can see the polygons flickering. There's nothing like that, and with this technology, we can plug in any movement and the body executes that movement correctly.

"This puts us a year ahead of everybody else in the industry. I could do a soccer game or a sports game very easily with this technology. People haven't even thought about what we are doing. Everyone is talking about tessellation and talking about how it will be where everyone is going. The Quake guys are now saying that this will be their next big thing.



CONTROL YOUR POWER

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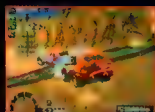


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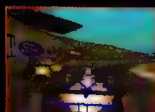
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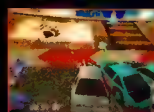
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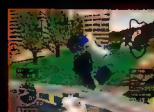
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DESTRUCTION DERBY 2
PSYGNOSIS LTD.

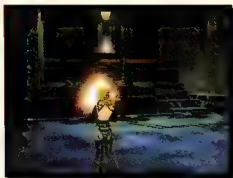


ANDRETTI RACING
ELECTRONIC ARTS

It's Official: EGM's parent company Ziff-Davis has announced that P.S.X. magazine has been named the **Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine**. The premiere issue will be on newsstands Sept. 23. It will have a playable PlayStation disc packaged with it that will feature playable PlayStation demos and will include sneak peeks of soon-to-be released first- and third-party titles.

Turok 2 is in the works. Details are trickling in. Turok: The Dinosaur Hunter sold very well in the U.S. and is doing well abroad. Our sources at Iguana told us that Turok 2 will have **Rumble Pak compatibility** and will use the "hot swap" technique to allow for the use of the Nintendo 64 Memory Pak. Iguana is working to make sure that the **Rumble Pak is used not only to register hits**, but also to make players feel the roar of a nearby T-Rex. The graphics are also being improved so that the game looks even more realistic than the original. It isn't known whether **Turok 2 will have a Multiplayer Option**. The game should follow the trend of other first-person perspective action games coming for the N64. The game is expected sometime next year.

Crystal Dynamics signed a publishing agreement with Midway Ent. to release **Gex 2: Enter the Gecko** for the PlayStation and N64 as well as Pandemonium 2.



"We've already got Interpolation, everybody says they are gonna have it. (Interpolation means going from any frame to any frame which means your game animation will run silky smooth, resulting in an amazingly fluid feel.) We have it running already."

The few details that Perry would reveal about the game are that the main character will be an angel/cherub sent to clean up the disgusting world of the future. This even involves killing hookers and assorted other imperfect beings that inhabit the Earth.



get a dwarf. We put adverts in publications, and went through a variety of talent agents before we found the person we were looking for. It was a tenuous process, but in the end everything worked out fine." Perry said.

The concept and the story line are still being worked on. But the technology is the thing that drives this project according to Perry.

Interplay is hoping that Messiah will be their savior while David Perry (below) has pushed the gaming envelope in terms of technology and overall game design once again.



all accounts is getting ready to go public sometime next year. This technology will go a long way to helping them reach their goals.

"At the moment we are focusing on the technology and the fact that it will kick Quake's and Unreal's butts."

To win the game, your goal is to end life on Earth as we know it.

To create the angel/cherub character, a four-foot black dwarf was motion-captured in a Los Angeles studio.

"We searched high and low to

"At the moment we are focusing on the technology and the fact that it will hopefully kick Quake's and Unreal's butts," Perry said.

This new technology should open more than a few doors for Shiny and Interplay who by

Interplay's tough times seem to be behind them as they have been working hard on their VR Sports brand. They have already secured National Football League and NHL licenses and are working on retaining their MLB license.

SEGA PUTS WHAMMY ON 3DFX

Segada to stick a jolt in 3DFX and send their share prices tumbling is the company's chief goal. They will no longer be using 3DFX's Voodoo Graphics chipset in the new 64-bit system code-named Blackbird. This announcement came on the heels of reports stemming from the July issue of Microprocessor Report that NEC had already rejected the 3DFX technology as the technology was too powerful for Sega's machine. EGM has learned that NEC's secret architecture code-named ARX will also be used in arcade machines. Sega still may use the technology in some of its new arcade games, but will ob-

3DFX responded to the news by saying the decision was not one of the most important. Greg

Sega's chief executive, who is making less than 10 percent of projected 1998 revenue. The statement contradicted an earlier statement made in the company's initial public offering in which the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) had stated that "the timely development of the Sega Saturn and the successful introduction and sale of the new Sega game console by Sega will be critical factors affecting the company's future business." Sega owns 10 percent of 3DFX and still plans to pay them to use the technology so that they can retain the rights to use it. The reason for this is that Sega has made some inquiries about using the technology and Sega





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MEN IN WIGS GIVE NINTENDO GREY HAIR

NEW LAW PAVES WAY FOR EUROPEAN LICENSEES

Nintendo was legislated to change the way they do business with European game developers. When the European Economic Commission approved Nintendo's new licensing agreements, they changed the way

on how many games licensees can release and Nintendo's approval is no longer required, unless the licensee elects to use a Nintendo trademark for a game. Additionally, licensees do not have to have their games for the Nintendo 64, Super

This differs from how Nintendo is allowed to operate in the rest of the world where companies are not only limited by the number of games they produce for Nintendo's systems, but they must have prior approval from Nintendo on each

"Under the terms of the new EEC competition law there are no limits on how many games licensees can release...approval is no longer required."

Nintendo has done business with developers all over the world for more than a decade. Nintendo is now in compliance with a strict new competition law that could have very significant ramifications for hardware manufacturers and European-based software development houses. Nintendo's new agreement differs significantly from those set up in the U.S. and Japan.

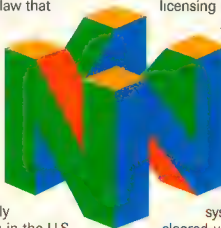
Under the terms of the new EEC competition law there are no limits

Nintendo or Game Boy manufactured by Nintendo.

Other objections that the Commission had to Nintendo's licensing arrangements have either been deleted or amended so as not to raise competition issues. The EEC has now determined that any infringement of the law regarding any of Nintendo's systems has been cleared up and that this new agreement will provide for greater competition in Europe.

title and must have the cartridges manufactured by Nintendo.

Nintendo officials could not be reached to comment on the ruling.



Midway has two new collections of their classic games titles in the works for the Sony PlayStation. **Midway's Arcade's Greatest Hits Vol. 2** will include Spy Hunter, Splat, Root Beer Tapper, Moon Patrol, Blaster, Joust 2 and Burger Time. They are shooting to have this game ready for a fall release. The second game planned for release in the first quarter of '98, **Atari's Greatest Hits Vol. 2**, will include Marble Madness, Gauntlet, Road Blaster and Crystal Castles. We are also hearing rumblings that a **Nintendo 64 Greatest Hits** ensemble is being considered.

The Return of Zero Divide features the game's **eight original characters: Zero, Cygnus, Wildz, EOS, Draco, IO, Yau and Nereid**. They return for another 3-D polygonal fighting tournament. This time they're joined by the crab-like Cancer, a virtual boy Nox and a female **robot Boss** character named **Pixel**. The game runs at 60 frames per second within a variety of animated 3-D backgrounds. The original Zero Divide was published for the PlayStation by **Time Warner Interactive (Atari Games)**, now a division of Midway Games. So far, no company has announced plans to publish the game in North America.

Mega Man X4 is coming to the PlayStation and the Saturn and will be released later this month. For \$10 more gamers will be able to not only take home a copy of the game but a limited-edition game pak and a special Mega Man X4 figurine.

THE KARNAGE KONTINUES

MK4 SITE EXPOSED

Midway has just released the new installment of the most popular fighting game series, **Mortal Kombat 4**. The new game features a new set of characters, including the new character, **Baraka**, and a new stage, **Baraka's Lair**. The game also features a new set of moves for the existing characters, including the new move, **Baraka's Lair**. The game is available on PlayStation 2, Xbox, and PC.

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WWW.MK4.COM.



MDK Explodes Onto The PlayStation™ Game Console.

"...we could be looking at a 1997 PlayStation game of the year."

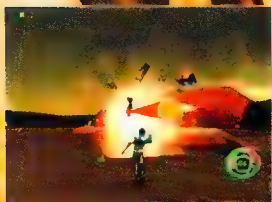
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IT THINKS.

THEREFORE IT KILLS.



Actual PlayStation Screen Shots

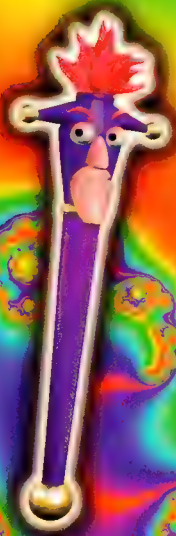
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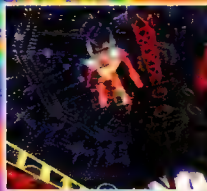
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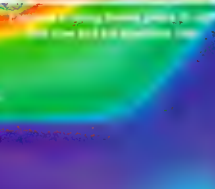
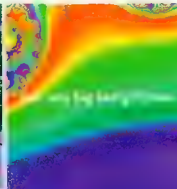
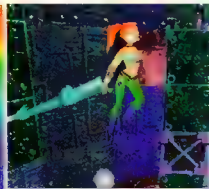
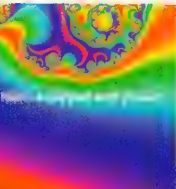
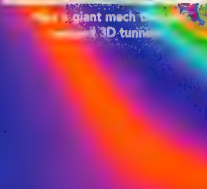
EGO



Satisfy all your needs, wants and...



Descend into the all new psychotic world of Pandemonium 2 and twist reality inside out. Explore a whacked-out psychedelic landscape with Nikki's insane double jump—then dominate with Fargus' maniacal attacks by hurling his viper-tongued side-kick Sid for skull crushing good times. Navigate the undulating 3D hyper-kinetic backgrounds 'till it turns your brain to puddin'. Hey...it's a twisted new world of furious gameplay that'll devour you before you truly understand it. So have a good trip.



Visit www.777.com for
Game Rating Information

Pandemonium 2



NYKO BRINGS THE THUNDER WITH AUTHORITY

FIRST TO RELEASE NEW N64 THIRD-PARTY RUMBLE PAK

Nyko is sending rumbles across the gaming landscape as they have reached the first N64 third-party Rumble Pak device. It does the same thing as the Nintendo Rumble Pak except it's a little bit cheaper. Nintendo's pak is \$19.99 and for a time it was only available through their 1-800 customer service line or you had to purchase Star Fox to get it. Nyko's pak sells for \$16.99.

Mad Catz, Interact and a number of other peripheral companies have their own versions of the Rumble

Pak. But we haven't received samples of those peripherals as of this writing.

Many previously released games that were popular will be rereleased according to a Nyko press release. Some of the rereleased titles that are expected to be modified to accommodate the motion feedback include WaveRace 64, Super Mario 64, Turok, Doom 64 and Mario Kart 64.

"We're very happy that we are the first major accessory maker to be able to ship this new controller add-on," said David

Naghi, vice president of marketing Nyko Technologies. We will be supporting the motion feedback by announcing other products in the next few months.



Right now Star Fox and GoldenEye: 007 are two great games utilizing the Rumble Pak functionality.



LICENSE TO KILL M2 AXED: 3DO REACTS

When you give \$100 million to someone in technology, it's your prerogative whether to bring it out or to kill it and not to waste more of your money. No one is completely certain why Matsushita (Panasonic) turned and ran away from getting a piece of the Japanese gaming business. By all accounts, the hardware was ready to go and a number of games were nearly completed when Matsushita President Yoichi Morishita told the press in Japan that the company was no longer supporting the development of the Neo console gaming system.

Whether it was the fact that they didn't want to go up against Sony and Nintendo or that they would take their losses and run, in any case, you won't see an M2 console anywhere.

The 16-bit gaming Neo console had been rumored and it's official. It was a console, it was a 16-bit console, it was a Neo console.

For those who have been following the Neo console, there are some who would not surprise that the Neo console was canceled. The Neo console was a 16-bit console, it was a 16-bit console, it was a Neo console.

For those who have been following the Neo console, there are some who would not surprise that the Neo console was canceled. The Neo console was a 16-bit console, it was a 16-bit console, it was a Neo console.

The M2 was a very powerful 16-bit console with a lot of RAM and a big disc drive. Perhaps the 3DO was slightly ahead of its time because of the design costs, but the Neo console was a 16-bit console, it was a 16-bit console, it was a Neo console.

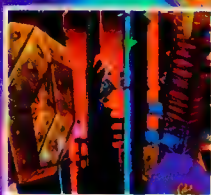
For his take on the Neo console, see the Neo console. The Neo console was a 16-bit console, it was a 16-bit console, it was a Neo console.

They recognized that Neo console and Neo console. The Neo console was a 16-bit console, it was a 16-bit console, it was a Neo console.

LIBIDO




desires.



Hidden bonus levels take to family name.





IN
:06 SECONDS,
THE COMPUTER
PILOT IN
ACE COMBAT 2
WILL SEND
YOUR JET
CRASHING
TO EARTH.

YOUR EGO
WILL FOLLOW
SHORTLY
THEREAFTER.





Uh-oh.

ACECOMBAT 2

SUPERIOR ENEMY INTELLIGENCE

BOMBS AWAY

EGM STAFFERS BATTLE AT BOMBERMAN

It was a battle royale and EGM staffers gathered in the conference room for a fight to the finish. Once the pizza was delivered, the door was bolted shut and

one person would emerge as the Sega Saturn Bomberman champion.

Ten people participated and only one was left standing. The contest was sponsored by Sega. Shawn "The Mad Bomber" Smith (pictured to the right in his custom-made Bomberman outfit) took home the trophy, in this case a leather jacket. Special thanks to Marci Ditter of Sega for overseeing the tournament and to Sega for sponsoring the event. It was a clean fight and except for a few pizza-stained Saturn controllers, no damage was done.



PRESS START

Take Two Interactive recently acquired the assets from GameTek Inc.

Under the terms of the agreement, **Take Two** acquired a European sales and distribution office, a Canadian development studio (Alternative Reality Technologies) as well as the **worldwide rights to several Game Boy titles** along with the rights to develop Jeopardy! and Wheel of Fortune for the Nintendo 64. The games will include **all-new questions and puzzles** as well as a feature that will allow

the player to control camera angles and alternate between several different viewpoints around the set. Jeopardy! will be hosted by an **animated version of Alex Trebek**, and Wheel of Fortune will incorporate video footage of Vanna White. The titles are expected to be released in time for Christmas.

Sega has joined forces with two of the world's top underground DJs, **Commander Tom and DJ MARS**, to create a dance club mix from the music in its hit game for the **Sega Saturn, Fighters Mega-Mix**. The song entitled "Fighters" debuted on KLYY FM's radio show "Lighted" in Los Angeles and was expected to be released as a single sometime in September.

Commander Tom and DJ MARS are best known around the world for their dance tracks.

PRODUCT REVIEW

STICK 'N' STAY

EAGLE MAX WILL HELP YOUR SCORES SOAR

If you're a fan of flying games, you'll be glad to hear that the PlayStation 2 has a new addition to its arsenal. The Stick 'N' Stay by Eagle Max is a new controller that's designed to help you soar through the air. It's a new controller that's designed to help you soar through the air. It's a new controller that's designed to help you soar through the air.

With its unique design, the Stick 'N' Stay is a new controller that's designed to help you soar through the air. It's a new controller that's designed to help you soar through the air. It's a new controller that's designed to help you soar through the air.

The Stick 'N' Stay is a new controller that's designed to help you soar through the air. It's a new controller that's designed to help you soar through the air. It's a new controller that's designed to help you soar through the air.

fully programmable, allowing you to customize the stick to your own gaming style. It's a new controller that's designed to help you soar through the air.



This is one solid controller that any dog would break its teeth trying to chew on. It is definitely a tough controller!

And it also played it for me. I was able to play it for me. I was able to play it for me. I was able to play it for me.

STICK 'N' STAY

hot \$39.99 (MSRP)
AVAILABLE NOW

Pluses: Isn't a one-dimensional controller and can be used with driving games as well as flying games. It is very durable and should last through many dogfights both on and off screen. The ease of motion of the stick is also a plus.

Minuses: LT and RT Select and Start buttons were a little too close together, making it tough when you are in the heat of battle.

EXACT

PRESS START

Namco and Squaresoft of Japan have joined forces. The companies announced plans for the two to enter a licensing agreement. **Under the terms of the agreement, Squaresoft will develop software based on Namco's System 12 hardware and Namco will perform all manufacturing and distribution.** Until now, **Square has focused on the consumer market** but they believe this alliance will be very beneficial in a number of ways. Not only will it help **strengthen their position as a leading software developer,** but it will also give them a much-needed presence in the high-technology commercial arena. **Dream Factory, a subsidiary of Square, will be in charge of the first project's software development.** This is the same design group that designed Tobal No. 1 and Tobal 2 for the Sony PlayStation. The new game will utilize System 12's 3-D capabilities. **The game was scheduled to debut at the JAMMA show** being held this month in Japan. System 12 is the same hardware being used to power Namco's smash arcade hit Tekken 3. It is a **high-performance board developed in cooperation with Sony Computer Ent.** "We are thrilled about joining forces with such a strong software developer," said Frank Consentino, VP of sales and marketing for Namco of America. "Having Squaresoft develop cost-effective, high-tech games on System12 will further strengthen Namco's position in the gaming marketplace."

TIGER USES THE FORCE

Tiger is roaring to get their Star Wars Giga Friends to market. They have three ready to go as of press time. Yoda isn't a pet. He will teach you the ways of the Force. He'll teach you self control and restraint and the ability to guess correctly. He will periodically pass on bits of Jedi wisdom. R2-D2 is also available. You will be able to program him to solve puzzles, dodge stormtroopers and help him save Princess Leia. R2-D2 can also be programmed to do different things on screen. He powers down

at night to recharge, and you can even give him an oil bath to clean out his circuits.

Rancor is the fiercest of the Giga Friends. His food consists of people who are thrown into the pit. He will be under your control.

All three of these will be available sometime in November of this year for between \$9.99 and \$12.99.



RADICAL AND DISNEY TO PLAY BALL!

Radical Entertainment, a Vancouver-based software developer, recently set up a development studio in San Francisco's China Basin. They rented 25,000 square feet of office space and signed a five-year lease.

The company has declined comment on a licensing agreement between themselves and Disney's ESPN sports studio. **EGM** has learned that the deal was close to being signed as of this writing. The deal could see Radical develop and publish a variety of sports titles based on the ESPN affiliations with the major sports. **EGM** has also learned that Radical has petitioned Major League Baseball to get an official license.

We have also learned that baseball will be the first sports game released, followed by racing, football and Xtreme sports titles.

Currently Radical employs 150 people in Vancouver and is in the process of hiring another 75 people by

September, adding the total number of employees to 225.

To further solidify their position as a serious sports contender, they recently hired Scott Rohde, a well-known Sega Sports producer, and David Dempsey, a public relations giant, who spent 10 years working at EA Sports before making a brief stop at Sega. Mike Ribero, former executive vice president of sales and marketing at Sega of America, has been CEO of Radical Entertainment since 1996 after leaving Sega.

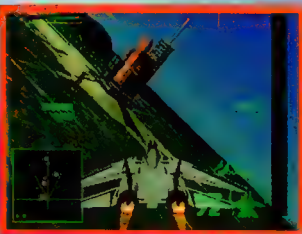
By all accounts Ribero was key to putting together the Disney deal along with other Radical staff members.

ESPN is a worldwide leader in sports and has a loyal sports following in viewership on its cable television channels ESPN and ESPN2. It also has a very popular Web site ESPN Sportszone (www.espn.com).

No formal announcement has been made and when reached for comment, Radical officials declined to make any announcements.

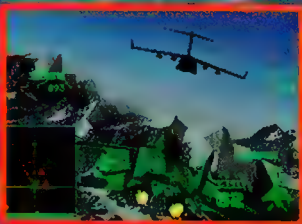
ACE COMBAT 2

SUPERIOR ENEMY INTELLIGENCE



- The most realistic dogfights ever created for the PlayStation™ game console.
- Total 3-D polygon environment - fly freely and unload your arsenal with reckless abandon.
- Advanced artificial intelligence - cunning and calculating enemy pilots.
- 30 formidable missions - nearly double the missions of Air Combat.
- Awesome mission debriefings - dynamic diagrams and moving maps for surgical strikes.
- Secret planes and hidden missions - the better you fly, the more you'll reveal.

POWERED BY
namco

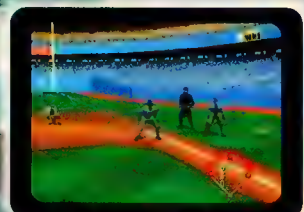




NICE BUNT, JUNIOR.

THE FUTURE OF SPORTS HAS LANDED. INTRODUCING MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL,
FEATURING KEVIN GRIFFEY JR. OVER 1500 MOTION CAPTURED MOVES
PLUS THE REALITY BAT, THE ONLY TRACKING SYSTEM THAT CREATES
AN INFINITE NUMBER OF REALISTIC SWINGS. AUTOMATICALLY
IT'S ONE GIANT LEAP FOR BASEBALL.

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October 1997

HOW TO READ THE TOP 10 CHART

5 **5** **Name of Game**
Publishers Name

Editors' Choice Award

* Consecutive Months On The Chart

Rank Number

OVERALL

- Final Fantasy VII**
PlayStation/SCEA
- GoldenEye 007**
Nintendo 64/Nintendo
- Madden NFL 98**
PlayStation/Electronic Arts
- NFL GameDay '98**
PlayStation/SCEA
- Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee**
PlayStation/GT Interactive
- PaRappa the Rapper**
PlayStation/SCEA
- Herc's Adventure**
Saturn/LucasArts
- Tetrisphere**
Nintendo 64/Nintendo
- Warcraft II**
Saturn/Electronic Arts
- MLB '98**
PlayStation/SCEA

PLAYSTATION

- Final Fantasy VII**
SCEA
- Madden NFL 98**
Electronic Arts
- NFL GameDay '98**
SCEA
- Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee**
GT Interactive
- PaRappa the Rapper**
SCEA
- MLB '98**
SCEA
- Bushido Blade**
SCEA
- Ace Combat 2**
Namco
- Discworld 2**
Psychosis
- Poy Poy**
Konami

NINTENDO 64

- GoldenEye 007**
Nintendo
- Tetrisphere**
Nintendo
- Int. Superstar Soccer**
Konami
- Star Fox 64**
Nintendo
- Blast Corps**
Nintendo
- Mario Kart 64**
Nintendo
- Wave Race 64**
Nintendo
- Super Mario 64**
Nintendo
- Doom 64**
Midway
- NBA Hangtime**
Midway

SATURN

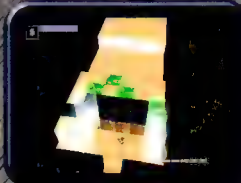
- Herc's Adventure**
LucasArts
- Warcraft II**
Electronic Arts
- Sonic Jam**
Sega
- W.S. Baseball '98**
Sega
- Fighters Megamix**
Sega
- SF Alpha 2**
Capcom
- Super Puzzle Fighter II**
Capcom
- Andretti Racing**
Electronic Arts
- Albert Odyssey**
Working Designs
- Shining the Holy Ark**
Sega

COMING SOON

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY'S GUIDE TO GAMES IN DEVELOPMENT

NINTENDO 64

Aerofighter Assault	Video Systems	Oct.	Shooter
MX Mythologies: Sub-Zero	Midway	Oct.	Action
MLB Featuring Ken Griffey Jr.	Nintendo	Oct.	Sports
Top Gear Rally	Kemco	Oct.	Sports
Barjo and Kazooie	Nintendo	Nov.	Action
Extreme G	Acclaim	Nov.	Racing
Gretzky '98	Midway	Nov.	Sports
Joopaidy!	Midway	Nov.	Simulation
Madden '98	EA	Nov.	Sports
NFL QB Club '98	Acclaim	Nov.	Sports
San Francisco Rush	Midway	Nov.	Sports
WCW vs. nWo World Tour	THQ	Nov.	Sports
Wheel of Fortune	Gemtek	Nov.	Simulation
Conker's Quest	Rare	Dec.	Action
Duke Nukem	GT Interactive	Dec.	First-Person
Mission: Impossible	Ocean	Dec.	Action
NBA in the Zone '98	Konami	Dec.	Sports
Robotch	Gemtek	Dec.	Action

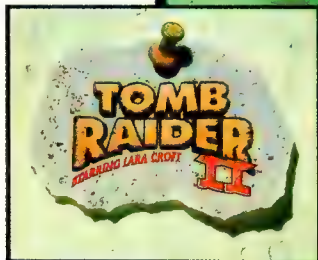


SATURN

Conner Cross	GT Interactive	Oct.	Action
CROC	Fox Interactive	Oct.	Action
Daytona CCE	Sega	Oct.	Sports
FIFA: Road to the World Cup	EA	Oct.	Sports
Lust Bronx	Sega	Oct.	Fighting
Mass Destruction	ASC Games	Oct.	Action
Mega Man X4	Capcom	Oct.	Action
Nascar '98	EA	Oct.	Sports
NBA Action '98	Sega	Oct.	Fighting
NBA Live '98	EA	Oct.	Sports
NHL '98	EA	Oct.	Sports
NHL Hockey '98	Sega	Oct.	Fighting
SSF 2 Collection	Capcom	Oct.	Fighting
Ten Pin Alley	ASC Games	Oct.	Sports
Enemy Zero	Sega	Nov.	Fighting
Magic Knight Rayearth	Working Designs	Nov.	RPG
Sega Touring Car Championship	Sega	Nov.	Sports
Sonic R	Sega	Nov.	Racing
Worldwide Soccer '98	Sega	Nov.	Sports
Maximum Force	Midway	Dec.	Action
The Wild 9	Interplay	Dec.	Action

PLAYSTATION

Armored Core	Sony Computer Entertainment	Oct.	Shooter
Beast Wars	Hasbro Interactive	Oct.	Fighting
Blasts	Sony Computer Entertainment	Oct.	Action
Bug Rider	GT Interactive	Oct.	Act/Sports
Bushido Blade	Sony Computer Entertainment	Oct.	Fighting
Castlemania: SoN	Konami	Oct.	Action
Cay Fighter Extreme	Interplay	Oct.	Fighting
Couner Cross	GT Interactive	Oct.	Action
CROC	Fox Interactive	Oct.	Action
Deathtrap Dungeon	Edor	Oct.	Action
Dragonball GT	Bandai	Oct.	Fighting
FIFA: Road to the World Cup	EA	Oct.	Sports
Fighting Force	Edos	Oct.	Action
Frigger	Hasbro Interactive	Oct.	Action
G. Police	Pygnosis	Oct.	Action
Ghost in the Shell	THQ	Oct.	Action
NBA Fast Break	Midway	Oct.	Sports
Intelligent Qube	Sony Computer Entertainment	Oct.	Puzzle
Mass Destruction	ASC Games	Oct.	Action
Mega Man X4	Capcom	Oct.	Action
Midway Collection 2	Midway	Oct.	Classic
Moto Racer	EA	Oct.	Sports
Museum Vol. 5	Namco	Oct.	Classic
NBA Live '98	EA	Oct.	Sports
NHL '98	EA	Oct.	Sports
NHL FaceOff '98	Sony Computer Entertainment	Oct.	Sports
Nightmare Creatures	Activision	Oct.	Adventure
Pandemonium 2	Crystal Dynamics	Oct.	Action
Rapazza the Rapper	Sony Computer Entertainment	Oct.	Musical
PGA Tour '98	EA	Oct.	Sports
Red Asphalt	Interplay	Oct.	Act/Sports
Riven	Acclaim	Oct.	Adventure
SSF 2 Collection	Capcom	Oct.	Fighting
Street Fighter EX+	Capcom	Oct.	Fighting
Tune Crisis	Namco	Oct.	Shooter
V. Rally	Ocean	Oct.	Sports
VR Football	Interplay	Oct.	Sports
Auto Destruct	EA	Nov.	Action
Batman & Robin	Acclaim	Nov.	Action
Cesar's Palace	Interplay	Nov.	Simulation
Carom Shot	Asci	Nov.	Simulation
CART World Series	Sony Computer Entertainment	Nov.	Sports
Colony Wars	Pygnosis	Nov.	Action
Cool Boarders 2	Sony Computer Entertainment	Nov.	Sports
Crash Bandicoot 2	Sony Computer Entertainment	Nov.	Action
Gretzky '98	Midway	Nov.	Sports
In the Zone '98	Konami	Nov.	Sports
Jet Moto 2	Sony Computer Entertainment	Nov.	Sports
Joe Blow	Sir Tech	Nov.	Action
MDK	Phymatics	Nov.	Action
NCAA FB Gamebreakers '98	Sony Computer Entertainment	Nov.	Sports
NFL QB Club '98	EA	Nov.	Sports
One	ASC Games	Nov.	Action
Overboard	Pygnosis	Nov.	Puzzle
Powellboat	Interplay	Nov.	Sports
Rampage	Midway	Nov.	Action
Ray Tracers	THQ	Nov.	Racing
Running Wild	Universal Studios	Nov.	Racing
San Francisco Rush	Midway	Nov.	Sports
Shadow Master	Pygnosis	Nov.	First-Person
Skullmonkeys	EA	Nov.	Action
SW: Masters of Teräs Käsi	LucasArts	Nov.	Fighting
Tantrics	BMG Interactive	Nov.	Action
Test Drive 4	ASC Games	Nov.	Sports
TMN Motorsports Hardcore 2	ASC Games	Nov.	Sports
Tomb Raider 2	Edos	Nov.	Adventure
Vs.	THQ	Nov.	Fighting
Warhammer 2: Dark Omen	Mindscape	Nov.	Adventure
WCW Nitro	THQ	Nov.	Sports
Youngblood	GT Interactive	Nov.	Action
Agent Gex	Crystal Dynamics	Dec.	Action
Alundra	Working Designs	Dec.	Adventure
Apocalypse	GT Interactive	Dec.	Action
Aqua Prophecy	Asci	Dec.	Adventure
Critical Depth	GT Interactive	Dec.	Action
Duke Nukem	GT Interactive	Dec.	First-Person
Grand Theft Auto	BMG Interactive	Dec.	Action
Major League Soccer	BMG Interactive	Dec.	Sports
NBA Shootout '98	Sony Computer Entertainment	Dec.	Sports
Spawn	Sony Computer Entertainment	Dec.	Action
SpecOps	BMG Interactive	Dec.	Action
The Wild 9	Interplay	Dec.	Action



Top: The Second Coming, slated for this fall. **Bottom:** Preparing for her return. **Opp page:** Committed for life.

4 A.M., TALLAHASSEE, FL.

TWO DRUNKS BATTLE IT OUT DOWN THE
HALL. THE 38 EXPRESS SQUEALS TO A
HALT EVERY HALF HOUR ON THE STREET
BELOW. SLEEP DOESN'T COME EASY IN
ROOM 23. BUT FOR 19-YEAR-OLD RAY
COOPER, IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THE
NOISE. AS HE SAYS, "IT'S BECAUSE SHE'S
ALL I SEE EVERY TIME I CLOSE MY EYES."



- **Electronic Arts Deals with a Tiger**
- **Konami Resurrects More Classics**
- **Capcom's Final Fight EX**
- **Atari Goes all out in 3-D fighting**
- **New Chipsets for Dual by NEC**
- **Lara Croft Appearance on N64**

Hi-dello, ho all you fun-loving, gossipmongers. It is I, your friendly neighborhood Q-Mann, gatherer of video game gossip, surveyor of behind-the-scenes news, guardian of gaming scuttlebutt, commander of industry buzz and an all-around humble dude. This month, my team of Q-spies and I have criss-crossed the globe at breakneck speeds. Why would we do such a thing? To give YOU our readers the information you demand and deserve.

That Q-crow reports that EA Sports has just signed an exclusive deal with Tiger Woods to use his persona on a new line of golf games. Although EA Sports already has a big-name golf license with the PGA tour, the video game giant obviously felt signing Woods was an opportunity they couldn't miss. Word on the street sez the deal spans several years, will be applied to several gaming platforms (PC, Nintendo 64, Sony PlayStation) and tips the scales somewhere near eight figures (that's \$10 million for those of you who are too lazy to count). The first TW golf game in the series is due to hit around mid-1998 on the PC, followed by a PlayStation and N64 game Christmas '98. In other EA news, we also hear that the company plans to support the N64 in a major way, with around seven titles due to hit store shelves in 1998 alone.

Over in Japan, Tuffy Aki (EGM's nipponese gossip grabber) just got his sticky mittens on a whole slew of news. First up, we have Konami. Reports from Tokyo suggest that Konami is going to continue their recent trend of resurrecting their classic titles. First up is the news of a 3-D N64 remake of the popular NES game, Time Pilot. One of the biggest controversies surrounding this game centers around how Konami plans on selecting a proper producer/director for TP64 (please, spare us the toilet paper jokes). You see, the original director of Time Pilot for the NES was none other than Yoshiki Okamoto, who is now the main man in charge of R&D development at Capcom Japan, one of Konami's main rivals. If Konami chooses to see the game through, fans of the original TP might be a bit disconcerted to learn that the original creator isn't involved in the project. On the other hand, those same hardcore fans are now beginning to expect more old-school magic from the big K and Konami only has so many titles to choose from. On a similar note, rumors of another Contra game for the PlayStation are stirring its heart once again. Work on this new Contra is supposedly being handled in-house at Konami Japan.

Upclose, as we all know, isn't immune to this trend of remake-mania either. In fact, the finishing touches are currently being applied to Final Fight EX, a new Sega Titan/Saturn version of the classic fighting series. Final Fight what, you say? Well, for those of you who don't always pay attention to Q-Mann, here's a quick recap: Final Fight EX is being designed in Japan (by Mr. Iijima of X-Men and Marvel Super Heroes fame) but is being programmed at Capcom USA. The game runs on Sega's Titan arcade architecture (which is closely related to the Saturn) and the home version will be available exclusively for the Saturn...Got it? We also hear Capcom might release Street Fighter III Dash early next year (FYI, SF2 Champion Edition was also known as SF2 Dash in Japan). Capcom is also rumored to be developing a 3-D Street Fighter using some of the characters from SFIII. Details are sketchy on both games, but we'll let you know more news as soon as it develops. Namco of Japan is working on a coin-op horse racing game called Final Furlong. Due to make an appearance at the Japanese AOD arcade show this fall, FF is a multiplayer (up to four machines can be linked together) game where the player can ride on a bucking, torque-feedback saddle. Urban Cowboy-style. Final Furlong is due to be released this winter and runs on Namco's Super System 22 hardware. (A Bowling 22. Nippon Bucky, Tokyo Man).

In other coin-op news, Atari is gearing up to make a big splash in the arcade scene with a top-secret 3-D fighting game. From what we hear, Atari is going all-out with this game and is confident that this title will compete favorably against anything the big boys (Capcom, Konami, Midway, Sega, Namco) have to offer. That, of course, is easier said than done but from what we hear, Atari is making all the right moves with this title. The first move (and arguably, the most important one) Atari has done with this game is hire James Goddard, a world-class fighting game guru (he worked on SF2: Champion Edition, SF2 Hyper Fighting and designed Dee Jay in Super SF2) to oversee all aspects of the project. We also understand that Atari has hired a team of nationally ranked, professional Street Fighter players to help with date game play as well as commissioning Cheryl Austin, Dead on Designs' senior art director to assist with the overall look of the game. The game will run on Atari's new 3Dx arcade board (San Francisco Rush, Mace), is due to be released early in 1998, and, according to Goddard, will be the first true 3-D fighting game to feature the precision and tight, balanced gameplay of a 2-D fighter. With Atari's new found determination in the arcade scene, powerful 3-D hardware and a dream team of designers and developers, the future looks bright for this game. The Q does have to wonder: though, is Juko Thread and this new title the same game?...Stay tuned...

Switching gears over to consoles, the Q has extracted more information on Sega's upcoming 64-Bit Dual system. While it was first thought that the Dual's 3-D sub-system would be based on PC accelerator architecture (perhaps the Power VR PCX-1 or PCX-2), we now hear that it's going to be based on a whole new chipset. NEC is currently working on two top-secret new graphic chipsets. The first chip is a new generation of PC accelerators called the PCM chipset (not to be confused with the acronym for Pulse Code Modulation). Secret graphic ASIC #2 is a chip that NEC has specifically designed with consoles and coin-up boards in mind: ARC. The Dual's graphic architecture will be based on ARC technology and is reportedly now dropping in its performance to price ratio.

Over in Newfoundland, work is progressing vigorously at Core on a new 3-D Tomb Raider-like game for the N64. The game will feature Lara Croft in an her splendorful bit alike, may not actually be called Tomb Raider because Sony has an exclusive deal on all console Tomb Raider games. Look for Lara Croft's Most Excellent Adventure 64 (or whatever the name turns out to be) on store shelves in the fall of 1998, possibly for the 64DD. In other N64 news, Donkey Kong Country 64 is reportedly being worked on by both Rare in England and NCL's own EAD group in Japan. Tuffy Aki reports that some dude named Shigeru Miyamoto has expressed much interest in working on a new Donkey Kong game and DKC 64 will be that game. Like Zelda 64 before it, DKC 64 is a dual-project, dual-format title in that it is being simultaneously developed for the N64 and the 64DD. Depending on how each game turns out, NCL will release DKC64 as a cart, or as a DD disc, or (as will be the case with Zelda) both as a cart and a twin-separate, stand-alone-DD disc. DKC64 is scheduled to be released in mid-1998, but whether or not it actually hits store shelves at that time is anybody's guess. Well, that wraps it up for this month, Q-Man. Tune in next month where the Q-crowd reveals more info on Sega's Dual, a top-secret project called Lido 230, and something very, very big. Until next time, remember...the truth is out there...

-THE Q



MEET NAMIRA.
SHE'LL BREAK
YOUR HEART.
CRUSH YOUR BONES.
KICK YOU INTO
A LAVA PIT.
THEN SHE'LL SNEER
AT YOUR WEAPON.

(AND SHE'S ONE OF THE NICE ONES.)



It's *Mace - The Dark Age*. The most graphically stunning 3-D fighting game to ever come home. In fact, *Next Generation* says, 'Mace is well on its way to being the best 3-D fighting game for Nintendo 64'.¹ There are 10 death-seeking adversaries, two devilishly difficult bosses and seven hidden characters. Each one with a deadly weapon or two and so many moves and combos that you'll need a high pain threshold just to watch. A word to the wise: if you're getting your face kicked in, we suggest you hit the 3-D Dodge Button - it might just save your butt. Not to mention your life.

MACE
The Dark Age

EVERYTHING'S A WEAPON.

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MIDWAY







"TOASTERS LIKE THIS DON'T COME WITH NEW CHECKING ACCOUNTS."

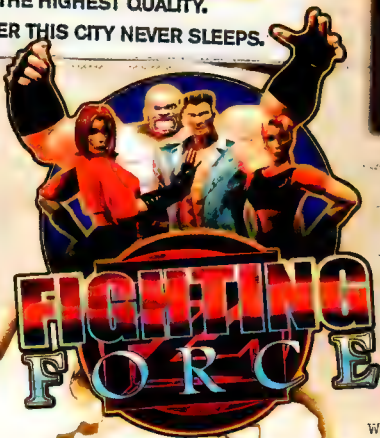
MACE DANIELS

IN A GAME WHERE JUST ABOUT ANYTHING
CAN BECOME A WEAPON, IT'S NICE TO KNOW YOU
CAN STILL FIND A GOOD OL' BAZOOKA.

HERE, THE INNER CITY STREETS ARE LITTERED
WITH WEAPONS OF ALL SORTS.
SOME OF YOUR OWN MAKING.

OTHERS READY-MADE AND BANNED IN MOST STATES.

ALL PROVIDE ENDLESS HOURS OF
EXPLOSIONS, GUNFIRE, AND MISERY
OF THE HIGHEST QUALITY.
NO WONDER THIS CITY NEVER SLEEPS.



EIDOS
INTERACTIVE
You've been warned.

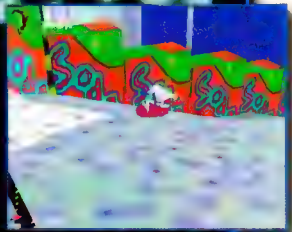
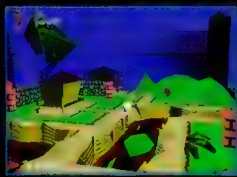
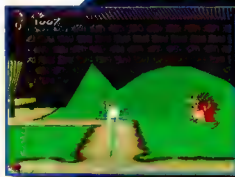
CORE

www.fightingforce.com

PROTOS

Here's proof that EGM brings you the first look at the newest of the new games. The following section contains everything from cut scenes to screen shots for titles in early development. Watch for updates in future Protos and more extensive coverage in upcoming Next Waves.

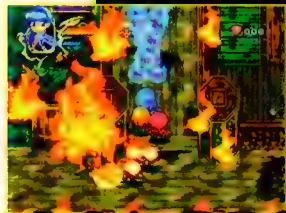
EARTHWORM JIM 3



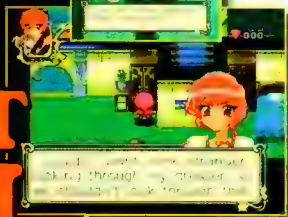
SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
NINTENDO®	Mid Qtr.
THEME	
Action	
PUBLISHER	SIZE
Interplay	N/A
PLAYERS	% COMPLETE
1	N/A

The wackiness continues with Interplay's third release of Earthworm Jim early next year. The most noticeable change fans will recognize in this now trilogy is the use of full 3-D levels. In this story, Jim takes a nasty hit on the head and falls unconscious. Here he must battle through segments of his subconscious mind that will take him to meet old classic enemies such as Professor-monkey-for-a-head as well as meet up with some new menaces. Earthworm Jim 3 contains that same groovy feel as his other two hits while allowing the total freedom 3-D games allow. With the past proven entertainment value of the other EWJ titles combined with new technology, EWJ3 is sure to be a hit.

PUBLISHER	SYSTEM	THEME
Working Designs	SEGA SATURN	RPG
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS	SIZE
April	1	100MB
% COMPLETE		
100%		



Working Designs is wrapping up translation work on this action RPG, which is based on a popular manga and anime series. The game centers on three Japanese schoolgirls who are magically transported to a fantasy world while on a field trip. They soon learn that the princess of this world is dying, so they embark on a quest to save her. Players may switch between the three girls at any time. Magic Knight Rayearth will feature plenty of cinematics from the anime, as well as digitized dialogue (although not as much as the Japanese version of the game).



MAGIC KNIGHT RAYEARTH

THE

SUSHI-X FILES

No. 7

Sushi_X@zd.com

Stories that only a mother could love...your mother!

LIFE 101

ALL I NEED TO KNOW...

That's right! All you need to know is what you learned in video games... or so they say. Eighteen things to commit to memory and use in everyday life:

- 1) Any problem that arises can easily be solved with violence.
- 2) You can overcome most adversaries simply by having enough quarters
- 3) If it moves, KILL IT!
- 4) Operating any vehicle or weapon is simple and requires no training
- 5) "Bosses" always hire henchmen weaker than they are to do their dirty work
- 6) If you find food lying on the ground, eat it
- 7) You can smash things and get away with it
- 8) When someone dies, they disappear
- 9) Money is frequently found lying on the streets
- 10) All shopkeepers carry high-tech weaponry
- 11) You never run out of bullets, only grenades
- 12) Ninjas are common and fight in public frequently
- 13) Whenever huge evil fat men are about to die, they begin flashing red or yellow
- 14) When you're born, you are invulnerable for a brief period of time.
- 15) All women wear revealing clothing and have great bodies
- 16) If you crash your vehicle, don't worry. A new one will appear in its place
- 17) Gang members frequently look the same and often have the same names
- 18) You sustain injury if you shoot and kill innocents

Thanks to all who contributed to this list and our pal, the Net, for allowing us to receive it. By the way, don't really use this stuff in real life.

TIME WARP

EGM IN THE '70S

Afros were only part of the vibe back then. Two-player Pong and drinking decaf coffee were groovy pastimes



Fashion was a big part of EGM back then and "cross-platform" had a whole different meaning



The standard greeting was a wink and a point, which still holds true even today. Those were the days, man



BACKGROUND MUSIC

NAME THAT GAME TUNE:

If you can guess what Sega CD game the lyrics below are from, send it to The Sushi-X Files @ the address @ the bottom of the page. You won't win anything from us, but we'll print your name(s) in the mag so you can show all your friends how cool you really are. Be prepared though, cuz these lyrics are cheesier than most people from Wisconsin. Good luck!

I know I'm gonna revive when I am on the road I've got nowhere to hide when I am on the road

There's no use in wondering what made you feel like parting from me then, girl how many more tears must I shed so as to melt the frigid wall of time?

So I'm gonna break it Have no fear on the road You know I'm sure to make it No matter what's on the road, I know too well it's very hard

It's just barking for the silver moon but I don't care how long it takes as long as she lights up my way in the gloom Until the very moment when I see you again, I'll keep speeding along the road to the sun

The burning sun! Hear the roar of my car I'm nearly round the bend, searching for the love that we'd share There's no one who can stop me now

(Thanks to Phil Theobald for supplying us with these tasty lyrics.)

AN OLDIE BUT A GOODIE

A MAGICAL PLACE WHERE ONLY WEIRDOS GO

The above statement is what one reader said about The Sushi-X Files, and we couldn't be more proud of a statement like that. Thanks!

READER FEEDBACK EDITION

CONTEST WINNERS!

YOU ENTERED & YOU WON!!!



Congratulations to those who entered and were chosen in the Bramha Force Contest from a few issues ago. Honestly, we received very few entries for this cool prize, but for those few who played, thank you. And for those who won, enjoy the awesome model kit (even though it's a little tricky to put together). Keep an eye out for more contests in the future, and remember, these contests are for you, our loyal subscribers! So play them and win YOUR prizes!

SUSHI SIGHTINGS

THE UNVEILING OF SUSHI-X?

I'm sure glad Sushi X doesn't really look like this! According to a drawing by Jason Rimmer, Sushi X is a cigar smoker who wears hippie glasses and has weird spiked hair. Hmm... maybe Jason spent a little too much time in the sun this summer. Hopefully he'll get better soon.



Do you think this picture of Sushi-X is lame or inaccurate? Well then, send one in if you think you can do better! Put Sushi-X in different scenarios like 'fishin'' or 'goat-herding' or something even weirder! The funnier the picture the better. Then send it to us, and maybe we'll throw it in a future Sushi-X Files.

OPTICAL DELUSIONS

Nu-Vision Optical Illusion

By Shane Swafford



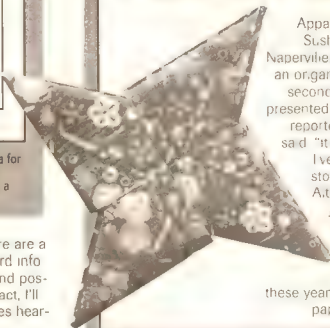
If you stare at this picture long enough, you will eventually see a spot.

Our friend, Shane Swafford from South Carolina went ahead and sent us his idea for a quick little one-strip-and-doggone-it, we printed it. If you have any ideas (like 'Shane's' or even better one of your own), send them in! NO! This is based on a drawing Shane sent us originally, which we then turned into the thing above.

NEXT MONTH: So what's next for Sushi-X Files, you ask? There are a lot of fun things about to happen like more contests, more weird info about all of us here at EGM, reader feedback (like this issue) and possibly even celebrity interviews about what games they play. In fact, I'll bet we have a Next Month section again! Remember, Sushi loves hearing your ideas, so keep the stuff comin'!

HOLIDAY SHOPPING LIST

A LIL' SOMETHING FOR OL' SUSHI-X

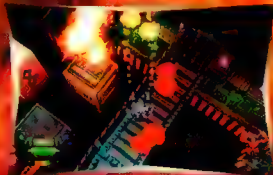


Apparently someone really likes Sushi X. Richard Mathias from Naperville, I.L., decided to send Sushi an organic throwing star (Sushi-X's second weapon of choice). When presented with the star, Sushi X was reported to have shed a tear and said "It is the most beautiful thing I've ever been given." But this story has yet to be confirmed. Although most of us think it's just a phase Sushi is going through, we have to admit he has been acting a little strange lately. Is he softening up after all these years? Whatever the case, nice paper-working skills, Richard.

Here are some things that the EGM editors can't get enough of: DWANGO (the online gaming network), fun in the sun, Decapitato (the frsbee game of chance... and possibly death!), soccer, red scarves, Mr. C from Happy Days, Halloween paraphernalia, Gary Coleman, Spawn action figures, Grand Royal magazine.

MACHINE HUNTER


Next Generation Online



48 BRYAN W. VAN DER PLIGT



PROTOS

SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
 PlayStation	October
PUBLISHER	THEME
GT Interactive	Action
PLAYERS	SIZE
1 or 2	CD-ROM
	% COMPLETE
	N/A


Well, the concept of this game is pretty evident from the title. Why mess with racing cars, when you can just hop on the backs of bugs? In Bug Riders, you can choose from up to 22 characters, many of whom have different weapons, traits and abilities that are influenced by the racing insect they are riding. GT Interactive promises this offbeat racing game will have silky-smooth animation, with the game clocking in at 30 frames per second. There are six different courses, a Practice Mode and a two-player "Deathmatch" Mode via split-screen.

BUG RIDERS!

PITFALL 3D

Activision has recently begun adding Bosses to this much-anticipated 3-D platform adventure, which, as we reported earlier, has been delayed until the first quarter of next year. Each Boss is expected to be huge and will require more than just straightforward weapon attacks to defeat (kinda like the Bosses in BMG's Spider). Pitfall 3D stars the grandson of Pitfall Harry, the hero of the Atari 2600 classic. He'll face many of the dangers of the original—pits, scorpions, rope vines, etc.—except now he'll go up against morphing enemies and a mysterious new hazard that Activision's calling the "Blue Ocean." This game is expected to have at least 25 levels, which are divided into eight distinct zones, including the

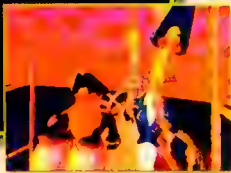
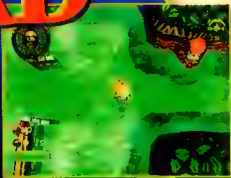


PUBLISHER	SYSTEM	THEME
Activision	 PlayStation	Adventure
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS	SIZE
Q1 99	1 or 2	CD-ROM
		% COMPLETE
		N/A

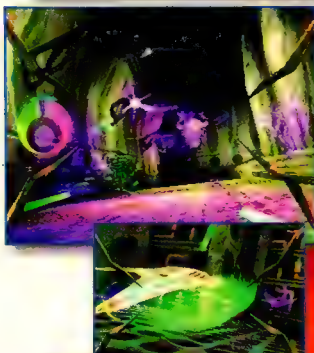
OVERBOARD




Fans of puzzle games with a bit of action should prepare for Overboard by Psygnosis. In Overboard players control a little cartoon pirate ship that can be decked out with a whole assortment of weapons. But offense is hardly what Overboard is about. The game will not only require some quick cannon fire, it will also require some brain power. A series of levers may have to be worked in order to open a gate into uncharted waters, or players may have to find their way through a maze to get to the next level. Whatever the case may be, the silly, cartoon feel still applies. The game also features a Deathmatch Mode where players can take on a friend in different ship-on-ship arenas.



PUBLISHER		SYSTEM	THEME	
Psygnosis			Action	
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS		SIZE	% COMPLETE
November	1 or 2	PlayStation	CD-ROM	60%



Weird, sci-fi worlds await gamers in Shadow Master, also by Psygnosis. The early version of the game we saw reminds us somewhat of Machine Head or Brahma Force. The difference is that Shadow Master is based completely on an alien world (one the creators of the title developed), complete with its own language of sorts. Players can take out the cybernetic enemies and robots with anything from standard-looking rockets to crazy triple bombs. Shadow Master marks the first time the developers from the PlayStation 1 era have been able to bring their vision to life on the PlayStation 2. The game is rated as a Mature 17+ game.

PUBLISHER		SYSTEM	THEME	
Psygnosis			Action	
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS		SIZE	% COMPLETE
November	1	PlayStation	CD-ROM	60%




SHADOW MASTER

HE PUT THE DEATH IN
DESTRUCTION...



PROTOS

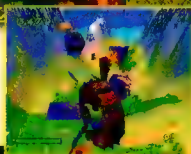
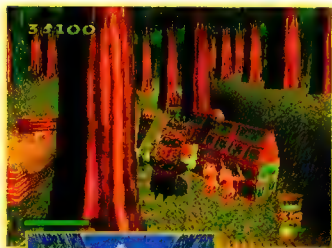


PUBLISHER		SYSTEM	THEME	
THQ		 PlayStation	Racing	
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS		SIZE	% COMPLETE
November	1		CD-ROM	90%

With gameplay reminiscent of the classic coin-op Chase HQ, Ray Tracers has you racing against the clock and battling bad guys on six courses. But instead of using weapons, you're forced to battle enemies and Bosses with your indestructible car. Like in Chase HQ, you must catch up with each level's Boss and defeat it before the timer runs out. You can smash into vehicles along the way for bonus points, but each crash wastes precious seconds. The courses wind through sewers, tunnels, canyons and meadows. You can choose from four vehicles (and one that's hidden), each with a turbo booster.

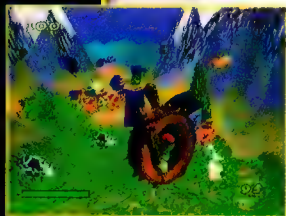


RAY TRACERS



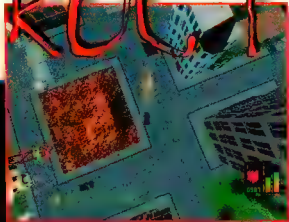
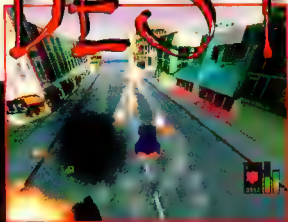
PUBLISHER		SYSTEM	THEME	
TBA		 PlayStation	Medieval Action	
RELEASE DATE	PLAYERS		SIZE	% COMPLETE
4th Qtr 1997	1		CD-ROM	N/A


Have you ever had the urge to get inside a large wooden wheel and roll down a hill flattening everything in your path? Yeah, and maybe while you're in the wheel you could whack at villagers, animals and trees with your heavy spiked club! You haven't? Well maybe if you were a two-headed ogre living in 15th-century Europe, you'd get that urge. Kill Wheel is a very unique game combining Monty Python-like humor with action-oriented destruction. Taking place in old England, it seems you, as a two-headed ogre need to destroy entire villages using nothing more than a couple of clubs and your trusty wooden kill wheel (you ride inside the wheel). With several wheels and clubs to choose from, simply roll down the hill whackin' everything in sight. Collect points for hitting taverns, shrines, bungalows and hospitals. Offering less points but very entertaining to launch are townspeople, warriors and cows. Complete each level in the allotted time and point collection requirements to move on to some unique Boss scenarios. This exciting title is being developed by Apt Productions.



KILL WHEEL

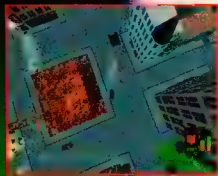
AUTO DESTRICT



SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
 PlayStation	November
PUBLISHER	THEME
EA	Racing
PLAYERS	SIZE
1	CD-ROM
% COMPLETE	
N/A	

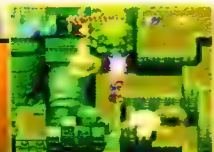
All hell breaks loose on this mission-based combat driving game when the player witnesses the murder of his wife and daughter by a fanatical cult called the Disciples of Lazarus. As a former race car driver, the player is recruited by another well-meaning organization to hunt down and destroy the bad boy cult and avenge the crime.

Looking reminiscent of both Quarantine and Twisted Metal, Auto Destruct requires players to cruise cities (London, San Francisco, New York) destroying enemy cars and buildings, replenishing weapons and gathering clues. Transport people safely, escort potential targets and find those power-ups all in an effort to locate and crush the evil cult.



SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
 PlayStation	December
PUBLISHER	THEME
Working Designs	RPG
PLAYERS	SIZE
1	CD-ROM
% COMPLETE	
N/A	

...the programmers at Alundra's design team also worked on the classic Genesis action RPG *Landerluster*. The fact that the games were developed by Sony is a bit ironic; Working Designs originally said they couldn't translate Sony's Japanese RPGs for the PlayStation because Sony of Japan didn't want anyone but SCEA bringing out such titles in the United States. Obviously, that policy has changed.

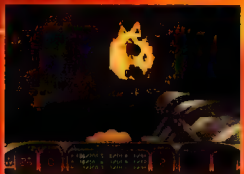


ALUNDRA

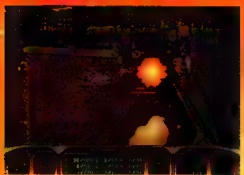
HE PUT THE GUTS IN GLORY.
NOW...



Laugh while you tear from
Hollywood to outer space!



Bag some aliens with over a
dozen hi-tech weapons!



An almost endless
non-stop rampage!

DUKE NUKEM: TOTAL MELTDOWN

Duke's in town. And there's nothing he hates more than
an army of alien punks crowding his space. 34 levels
of freak-smashing 3D mayhem should see to it.
Gigantic guns! Gruesome enemies! Total interaction!
And...all-out devastation! Don't mess with The Man!



www.3drealms.com

HE'S G TO GET

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Big weapons and bigger bosses for a real-fried fight!



Earthquakes, exploding buildings and working subways!



Four-player, split-screen Domination action.

DUKE NUKEM 64

From L.A. to the moon - 32 towering levels of 100% interactive carnage! On film sets, in bars, on moving subways...no butt-ugly alien is safe from the wrath of Duke! Grenade Launchers. Shrink Rays.

Hardcore 3D action. And graphics to kill for!

Duke's coming to take out the garbage!

COMING SOME!

NINTENDO 64



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REVIEW CREW



FINAL FANTASY VII

GAME OF THE MONTH

PLATFORM: PlayStation

PUBLISHER: SCEA

CATEGORY: RPG

PREVIEW: EGM #98

BEST FEATURE: STORY LINE

WORST FEATURE: SO SO ENDING

ALSO TRY: WILD ARMS



SHAWN

Preparations for the big one (issue 100, that is) have left Shawn's brain dry, but he still plugs away even with a spent mental. That coupled with late-night deadlines, Shawn has turned into a hardened man. At one point he was caught saying, "Just give me a patch of fabric and a spot on the floor, and I'll be alright." We hope he'll be OK.

CURRENT FAVORITES:
Final Fantasy VII
Abe's Oddysee
GoldenEye 007
Herc's Adventure
FAVORITE GENRE:
Action/Adventure



DAN

Shoe giving a 9.5 to a first-person shooter?? What has this world come to? Apparently, four-player GoldenEye deathmatches have gotten to him. Now the self-proclaimed "king of death-matching" wants to take on more competition. Good thing future reviewer and Bond wanna-be Craig Kujawa is around to try and put him in his place.

CURRENT FAVORITES:
PaRappa the Rapper
Final Fantasy VII
Gun Buller
GoldenEye 007
FAVORITE GENRE:
Strategy/Puzzle



CRISPIN

Darn! Now that we have an English version of FFVII in the office, we can't tease Crisp anymore about what he missed by refusing to play the Japanese version. We used to get a kick out of watching him clap his hands over his ears and sing "ta, ta, la!" every time we threatened to tell him about the plot twists and ending of the Japanese copy.

CURRENT FAVORITES:
Final Fantasy VII
GoldenEye 007
PaRappa the Rapper
Bustling Blade
FAVORITE GENRE:
Role-Playing



SUSHI-X

Halloween is here, and Sushi's getting geared up for the candy rush. He's having a tough time picking out a cool costume though, and can't seem to find anything cooler than his ninja suit. This year, he's hoping to get some authentic Riri Sticks in his bag. Hopefully, he won't scare away the Trick-Or-Treaters on our block like last time...

CURRENT FAVORITES:
Final Fantasy VII
SF 2X
SF Collection
GoldenEye 007
FAVORITE GENRE:
Fighting

RATING
SCALE

10=PERFECTION
9-VIRTUALLY FLAWLESS
8=SPLENDID
7=WORTHY
6=GOOD, NOT GREAT

5=AVERAGE
4=RENT FIRST
3=TIME-WASTER
2=DON'T EVEN RENT
1=FLUSH IT

EDITORS' CHOICE

Silver Awards are granted to games with a total average score of eight, while games that average nine or above receive Gold Awards

50 EGM



Being one of the early skeptics of Final Fantasy VII (FMV? Rendered backdrops? Come on...), I have to admit I had less than high hopes for the latest addition to the world's most popular RPG series. But now that I've completed the game in English (it was the hardest seven months of my life resisting the temptation to play the Japanese version), I can honestly say that FFVII is the best RPG that's ever been released in the United States—bar none. That's not to say it doesn't have its weak points, but compared to everything else that has been released Stateside, FFVII is easily head and shoulders above the rest. First of all, the graphics are incredible. The entire game is just a pleasure to watch, whether it be the gorgeous rendered backgrounds (which integrate seamlessly with the FMV) or the stunningly well-modeled polygonal overworld. My only problem with the graphics is that sometimes it's tough to figure out where you need to go in certain areas, but that's no big deal. Next up is the music. Well, being a FF vet, I have to admit the music is a tad disappointing compared to some of Nobuo Uematsu's previous efforts. Still, compare the music to any other RPG released in recent months, and it's pretty darn

Here it is, the game that has more buzz and hype surrounding it than Mario 64 did when it first came out. So does it live up to it? Most definitely. I was never heavily into the old ones, so I can't talk about plot continuity, but as a stand-alone RPG, FFVII is one of the best I've ever played. Great graphics, sound and overall gameplay. The one thing that stood

out as a problem for me, was the cinematic spell/special attack sequences. Now before you jump all over me, let me explain. The first few times they were awesome, but then by the fifth time or so, although still neat, they lost their appeal. Other than that **minor** flaw, once again, Final Fantasy VII was incredible from start to finish.

I'm the world's biggest fan of the American FF2 and 3. I'll love them until the day I die. That said, I must say that FFVII is an absolutely AWESOME sequel. Thank god, because I had miles-high expectations for this sucker. I am thoroughly impressed. The graphics and music are rich, as is the story line (despite its slight, but typical linearity). FFVII is far beyond

its competition and predecessors (though enough FF elements remain intact, like the music and the interface, that purists will not be disappointed in the least bit). The ending is OK—parts of it are disappointing and parts are amazing. But overall, FFVII is a work of art. I'm glad I didn't spoil this experience by playing the Japanese version!

No other RPG can pull off a cinematic experience like Final Fantasy VII! Right from the very start, you are immersed into the story line, and have an active role in your destiny. The FMV sequences are incredible, and the Fighting Modes are uniquely interactive. Use any magic spell, and you'll be treated to a display of colors, motion and mayhem! Many were

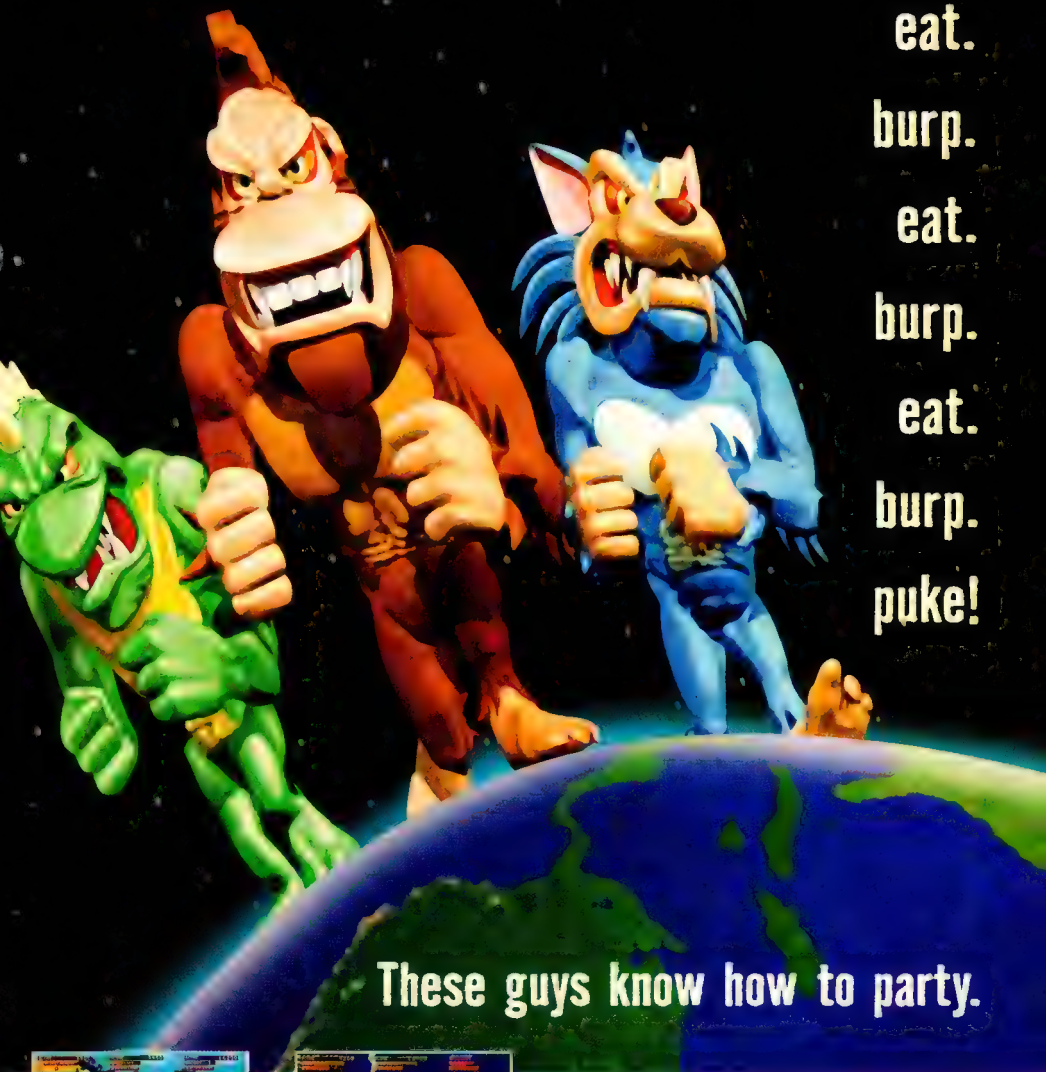
worried about the translation, but to our surprise, everything is included, if not improved for the U.S. version. Even mild swearing made it into our review game. Add to that a rockin', mood-setting CD soundtrack, and you've got a 40-hour PG-13 movie, not just a video game! Its only fault is the inability to cancel FMV and dialog boxes.

10
VISUALS

9
SOUND

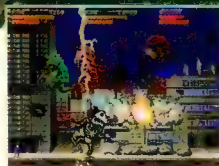
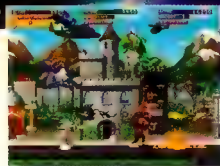
9
INGENUITY

3
REPLAY



eat.
burp.
eat.
burp.
eat.
burp.
puke!

These guys know how to party.



RAMPAGE
WORLD TOUR

SYSTEM: N64

GOLDENEYE 007

PUBLISHER: NINTENDO



CATEGORY: ACTION

PREVIEWED: EGM #98

BEST FEATURE: DEATH-MATCHES

WORST FEATURE: SLOW FRAME RATE

ALSO TRY: TROK

Not only is GoldenEye 10 times better than the movie, it's also 10 times more realistic. No other first-person shooter demands this much stealth and strategy. Instead of storming enemies like a space marine, you must sneak up on them or pick 'em off through your sniper rifle's telescopic lens (nothing's more satisfying than capping a guard from 100 yards away before he can trip the alarms—and this blood-soaked fun is from squeaky-clean Nintendo?). Developer Rare has packed everything that's cool about 007 into the game. You get the gadgets (including his wrist laser and spy camera) and the guns (everything from Bond's trusty PP7 to the Moonraker laser rifle). But this silicon Bond is more of a bad-ass than the movie version ever was. You can fire two Uzis John Woo style, cut loose like Dirty Harry with a .357 Magnum and even drive a tank over squads of troops! The 20 missions are crammed with objectives, and the environments are highly varied, from jungle to caves to a moving train. Even better are the insanely fun Multiplayer Modes, which allow for team play, the ability to play as villains from the films and too many other options to list here. Despite a little choppiness, it's more fun than four-player Mario Kart 64! This is absolutely the best first-person game ever.

—CRISPIN

I've always been a big fan of James Bond, so when I heard about this one I was excited. I'm happy to say that GoldenEye is the best game based on a movie ever. In fact, everything about the game is awesome, minus one thing: the sluggish frame rate at certain points in the game. Other than that, it's a keeper for sure. After all, this genre is my forté.

—SHAWN

OK, many of you know how I feel about first-person shooters, but I am VERY impressed with GoldenEye. For once, a game offers more than just: move, kill, move, kill. GoldenEye's enemies behave realistically, the missions give the game depth and it has awesome multiplayer options. I'd buy it solely for team deathmatch. I'm hooked, I'm sold, I'm in love.

—DAN

Sniping, peeking around corners and secret levels, weapons and abilities all make GoldenEye a smash hit, the best N64 title on the market to date. This was the only game that could somewhat sway all the FV11 freaks here. I was very impressed with the Four-player Mode, even if the precise aiming took some getting used to, right Hsu?

—SUSHI-X

9	9	8	8
VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY

SYSTEM: SATURN

SONIC JAM

PUBLISHER: SEGA



CATEGORY: CLASSIC COMP.

PREVIEWED: EGM #96

BEST FEATURE: SONIC WORLD

WORST FEATURE: WHERE'S SONIC CD?

ALSO TRY: SONIC 3-D BLAST

It's official! The buzz word is "archive." Now with so many collection CDs out there, it's getting harder and harder to review them. After all, this is the same set of games we've loved for years! Luckily for Saturn owners, Sonic Jam comes with the best Game Select Screen ever created: a preview of the upcoming 3-D style future Sonic games will use. As you explore the small area, you'll be presented with a set of sub-missions that get progressively harder. These missions become a new game of sorts, which are quite enjoyable to overcome. Completing all the missions opens up what we call the "Credits World." Along with this innovative area, Sonic 1, 2 and 3 users can now choose Knuckles instead of Sonic to create a new challenge. The Spin Dash has been added to Sonic 1 as well. This feature changes the perfectly emulated 16-Bit games into slightly new versions. So, if you're one of those players who traded in your Genesis for a Saturn, you can enjoy the "Blast-Processing" of yesterday, with a twist: True, these games are outdated, but they are classics, and owning all the Sonic titles on one CD is pretty handy. Whatever you do, don't buy Sonic Jam for the 3-D World Select Screen! Buy it if you're looking for classic 16-Bit gameplay for everyone in the family.

—SUSHI-X

The Genesis was my first 16-Bit system back in the day, so I have a soft spot for Sonic in my heart. Sonic Jam is a must-have for any fan of the original attitude-havin' animal. It has practically everything that is Sonic the Hedgehog. Not only are there the old games in all of their 16-Bit glory, there's the cool museums, sound and art libraries and Sonic info.

—SHAWN

I love compilations that compile only grade-A games. Sure the 16-Bit Sonic games may be old, but they're still very playable today. Add to that a very fun Sonic World minigame, and you have a very solid CD. Two things that could've made Jam even better: more of the 3-D world (this one's a teaser) and upgraded graphics (a la Mario All-Stars, only for 32-Bits).

—DAN

It's easy enough to find minor faults with this collection: same old graphics, same old music, no Sonic CD. But who cares? Replaying these classics in their original form (even the cheat codes still work!) is too much fun. Plus, now you can Spin Dash in the original Sonic, as well as cruise through an ultracool 3-D world filled with secrets and mini games.

—CRISPIN

7	7	5	7
VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY

SYSTEM: SATURN

HERC'S ADVENTURE

PUBLISHER: LUCASARTS



CATEGORY: ACTION

PREVIEWED: EGM #93

BEST FEATURE: HUMOR

WORST FEATURE: NO REPLAY

ALSO TRY: SWAGMAN

Last month we did a Hercules game, and now this month we're doing another! I mean, what's the deal? Seriously though, Herc's Adventure on the Saturn is an awesome title. Not only are the graphics good, the gameplay is flawless. On more than one occasion I found myself laughing out loud. For example, in the intro Herc is punching a lion in the head, but the lion doesn't seem to mind—it just wags its tail. I guess you'd have to see it, but trust me, the game is hilarious. There are plenty of levels to play through, all of them with their own style—in level design and enemy inhabitants. The levels are scattered all over Greece and other places (all that take you to "real" cities). Keep an eye out for gigantic enemies that not only look cool (from a cartoon standpoint) but also are funny to watch, like the Cyclops or boar. There are lots of weapons to pick up and other stereotypical items (like eating Gyros for health). The two-player Mode is a nice addition that takes me back to the good old days of 16-Bit games. Herc's Adventures' classic gameplay is refreshing amongst all the other fancy, 3-D titles these days. It may be a strange one for LucasArts to pick up, but hey, maybe George (Mr. Lucas to you) likes good comedy, good games and mythology. I'll pick it up.

—SHAWN

I suppose anything involving Hercules nowadays ends up being a sleeper hit. Herc's Adventure is no exception. It's easy to pick up, hard to put down. Two-player co-op makes it all the much better. I like the innovative levels and special weapons too. Herc's is a simple, enjoyable and fairly fun title with decent replay value and graphics that deserves a look.

—DAN

The gameplay in Herc's Adventures—especially in two-player Mode—is reminiscent of kick-ass classics like Zombies Ate My Neighbors, ToeJam and Earl, heck, even Gauntlet. It's simply a fun, top-down adventure with lots to explore and extremely imaginative enemies. It can get a little too maze-like at times; you'll run into a few frustrating dead ends.

—CRISPIN

Want some good ol' fashion action/arcade style gaming? Look no further, because Herc's Adventures is on the scene, boasting three characters, each having unique personalities and abilities. I love the straightforward action that doesn't rely on 3-D to impress me. Hercules is also riddled with many cool inside jokes and slapstick humor.

—SUSHI-X

7	6	8	3
VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY

ONE MAN! ONE SOLUTION. ONE STATE OF MIND.



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THE GALAXY IS FAR, FAR AWAY.
THE FIGHTING IS
UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL.



SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION

GOLDEN NUGGET

PUBLISHER: VIRGIN



CATEGORY: CASINO

PREVIEWED: EGM #99

BEST FEATURE: LOTS OF GAMES

WORST FEATURE: NO PERSONALITY

ALSO TRY: ANY CASINO GAME

Being set in the grand casino of the same name, Golden Nugget attempts to raise the questionable activity of gambling into an honorable pastime worthy of the Pope. Your goal is to gamble away \$10,000 and turn it into enough dough to play the real game, inaccessible until you become a cardsharp. In this stage, you get to follow Adam West around (about here, my eye are drooping), looking for clues about a missing computer chip that helps players cheat in casinos. Not only do you have to put up with the incessant whining of West, but also a quest which has nothing to do with actual gambling. When I pick up a gambling game, I'm looking for rock-solid gambling, not mediocre missions. Golden Nugget's best feature is the beautiful rendering of the actual Golden Nugget in Vegas. The artwork is great, but it's not necessary to enjoy the gambling. You do not get the intended feeling of awe when walking around the grand ballrooms on your way to losing a fortune. I can honestly say I enjoy "flat" gambling games far better, because the interfaces are quicker and leaner than Golden Nugget's, which can be very slow thanks to the heavy animation. I don't need to see the cards twirl in air as they're dealt. Just give them to me! There's not much new here.

-SUSHI-X

Two words: Adam West. Sure, you'd think this would be enough to make me give this one a 10, but unfortunately that's about all that's great about this one. It looks nice, has an interesting Story Mode and lots of games, but at its core, GN is a casino game with lots of good FMV. Any gambler man will like it, but I wasn't that impressed. It's a good rental.

-SHAWN

Virgin put a lot of effort into making the virtual casino in Golden Nugget look like Vegas' real deal. But while the game looks authentic, it lacks personality. For such a world-famous casino, the Golden Nugget sure is empty! The only people you see are just in the silly FMV plot. It's also hard to tell who wins poker games. Dealer voices are well done, though.

-CRISPIN

Golden Nugget is the most comprehensive casino game around, but it has too many faults. The Story Mode was a nice try, but boring (cheesy FMV should've died with the 3DQ); the poker games don't point out winners; you can't see the roulette and big wheel numbers. In general, the game lacks the personality that made the 16-Bit casino games fun.

-DAN

SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION

BUSHIDO BLADE

PUBLISHER: SCEA



CATEGORY: FIGHTING

PREVIEWED: EGM #95

BEST FEATURE: REALISM

WORST FEATURE: NOT FOR EVERYONE

ALSO TRY: SOUL BLADE

Bushido Blade has already become famous in Japan for what it does not have. No life gauges, 10-hit combos or round-based battles. So how good of a fighting game could it be without these vital ingredients? Actually, it's one of the best. Since damage to characters is registered on their bodies rather than on a meter, fights can end as quickly as they begin—with one well-aimed thrust of a sword. Consequently, survival depends on your level of concentration rather than how well you've memorized long strings of button taps. You must watch your opponents, read their posture and predict how they'll strike. Miss a crucial block and you're dead. Swipe enemies across the head, throat or chest and they're dead. Or you could lunge to the legs or arms and cripple them. And, unlike the Japanese version, you're rewarded with a spray of blood for each successful attack. But BB's innovations don't end with its combat system. Unlike most "3-D" fighters, you really do fight in three dimensions. You can leap and run anywhere in the sprawling, gorgeous arenas and duck behind trees and other objects for protection. You must battle with honor, too. Fight dirty (i.e., stab enemies in the back, attack 'em while they're down, etc.) and you'll get a lousy ending in the Story Mode.

-CRISPIN

Bushido Blade is fresh and all with its one-hit kills and traditional characters, but I'm afraid that newness wears off rather quickly. So after the one-player stuff is done and you go through the extras, the two-player Mode is all that's left. Mind you it's not Tekken 2 (it's not supposed to be) but still, Bushido is fun for a while. It's different, so I'd rent it first.

-SHAWN

I understand that Bushido Blade is unique, but I really couldn't get into this style of fighting. Too often, I would kill with one random button, and more frustrating, someone would do the same to me. On the upside, Bushido offers players much to learn and study. The different weapon techniques add a lot to the genre. Check it out if you're tired of the SF monotony.

-DAN

It's time to get serious. Only the best may enter the hallowed halls of Bushido Blade and live to tell the tale. This is by far the hardest fighter to master, yet the simplest to play (pushing random buttons yields powerful results). Skill will win the day, though—not a feature of many other fighters. While the interface is bland, it's addicting with practice.

-SUSHI-X

SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION

ODD WORLD: ABE'S ODDYSSEY

PUBLISHER: GT INTERACTIVE



CATEGORY: PUZZLE

PREVIEWED: EGM #99

BEST FEATURE: PUZZLES

WORST FEATURE: DIFFICULTY

ALSO TRY: LOST VIKINGS

It's been a long time since I've played one like this. I think the last time was Out of This World on the 3D0, so it took me a little while to get used to the style of gameplay—one where you more or less "guide" a character through room after room (and level after level) until you get to the end. Of course, that oversimplifies Abe's Odyssey by leaps and bounds. Oddworld: Abe's Odyssey not only has a weird name, it also is a weird game (which rhymes consequently). But it's not weird in a bad way by any means, it's weird in an ingenious, very original way. The graphics are incredible and look like hours of painstaking detail went into every one. In fact, everything about this game from an aesthetic and gameplay standpoint is flawless. The sound fits the game perfectly—Abe's voice and sounds he can make not only played a necessary part in the game, it also made me chuckle (how many characters can you make fart?). The story line was an interesting one and drew me into it. All of the characters (friends and foes alike) were imaginative and flawlessly animated. I'd say the one drawback to Abe's Odyssey is that after awhile, it becomes a task of memorization. Luckily there are some additions to help the replay value (like saving members of your fellow Mudokans).

-SHAWN

A sick, twisted game that deserves exposure! I didn't expect Abe's Odyssey to be this much fun. I also didn't expect it to be this hard. Some of the puzzles are too difficult—you may spend 1/2 hour on one sequence (though you'll enjoy doing it)! It's funny, addictive, beautiful... could go on, but I have to get back to having fun (and tearing my hair out in frustration).

-DAN

The similarities between this game and Flashback are obvious (both have great animation, cool environments, etc.), but OWO's puzzles are tougher. Luckily, you get unlimited lives, and after each death you usually reappear pretty close to where you died, so the game never gets too frustrating. Be warned: It'll take a lot of replay to earn the good ending.

-CRISPIN

At first glance, Abe looks to be yet another Blackthorn, but offers so many AI improvements that it stands apart. The game is complex, and the outcome depends on your character's moods and reaction time. For an adventure in realism, dive into Abe. Don't think this ride will be easy though, because the obstacles are tough to overcome.

-SUSHI-X

5

VISUALS

5

SOUND

6

INGENUITY

8

REPLAY

8

VISUALS

9

SOUND

9

INGENUITY

9

REPLAY

10

VISUALS

10

SOUND

9

INGENUITY

8

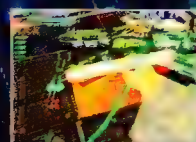
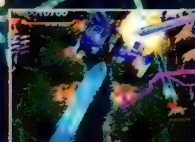
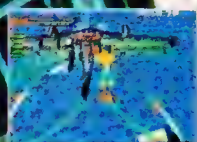
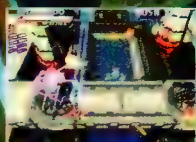
REPLAY

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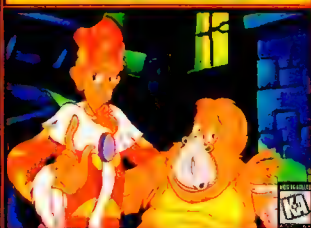


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SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION

DISCOWORLD 2: MB

PUBLISHER: PSYGNOSIS



CATEGORY: GRAPHIC ADV.

PREVIEWED: EGM #90

BEST FEATURE: HUMOR

WORST FEATURE: ABSTRACT PUZZLES

ALSO TRY: BLAZING DRAGONS

Discworld 2—like the original—suffers from the same minor problem that plagues most point-and-click adventures. You're forced to sweep the pointer across the screen to find objects you can pick up or interact with (if you have the mouse, I highly suggest using it). But that's no big deal, because—also like the original—DW2 is so pee-in-your-pants funny that it never really gets boring. The game is constantly poking fun at itself (and, occasionally at you). Its mix of low-brow fart jokes and high-brow social commentary should appeal to everyone. Hilarious highlights include a vampire who hates his lot in life, simply because he dislikes working at night. You'll also have a run-in with a prima donna sheep who demands to be played by a stunt man for what is actually a pretty lame stunt. The game's puzzles can be extremely abstract and hard to figure out at times, but you have to expect that when you enter the surreal realm of Discworld. More often than not, you'll need to do a lot of experimenting with items in your inventory to clear the puzzles. As in the first game, it's the voice acting that adds the most personality to DW2. And the clever conversation interface lets you milk several minutes of goofy digitized voice from every character in the game.

—CRISPIN

This one is your standard point-and-click adventure, so those of you who aren't into these types: STAY AWAY DW2 suffers from mindless clicking on objects until something works. The dialogue is hilarious and with Eric Idle as the voice of the main character, what more could you ask for (except maybe John Cleese)? It's a good one for the humor.

—SHAWN

Playing Discworld 2 is like watching a twisted, drawn-out *Monty Python* movie. I love the humor (even the manual was fun to read), but certain conversations could've been cut short. The social commentary and not so subtle hints keep the game lively, despite its derivative gameplay (you won't find much new here). Nothing side-splitting, but it's still fun.

—DAN

If you don't have Sony's mouse, here's a good reason to buy it. Discworld isn't packed with excitement, but it's got tons of humor in every corner. What do you expect from a game with "sarcasm" as an option for interacting with others? The animation is done quite well, and the only real detriment is the lagging gameplay when using a controller.

—SUSHI-X

8	9	6	3
VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY

SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION

PARAPPA THE RAPPER

PUBLISHER: SCEA



CATEGORY: MUSICAL

PREVIEWED: EGM #99

BEST FEATURE: JET BABY

WORST FEATURE: CHEAP CHEAP

ALSO TRY: NOTHING LIKE IT

I guarantee you that by the end of the year, Parappa will be as common a household name as Mario or Sonic. He is the hippest, most lovable video game character I have ever seen. After playing this game, I wanted to see more of Parappa, whether it'd be a sequel game or his own cartoon series. The music is incredible. Several of the tunes are so catchy, you'll be singing them for days (I hope the soundtrack gets released separately). The story line? If possible, it's better than the music. The tales of Parappa are hilarious (in a somewhat alternative sense). This is the kind of game you're going to love immediately, and it's the type of game you're going to show off to every one of your friends (video gamers or not). Everyone will get a kick out of Parappa. So why not a perfect score? It could've easily earned it, but the two problems are: 1.) The game is very short (you can beat it in a day), and 2.) Often, pressing the buttons at the right time seems to depend more on luck than on skill. I was very frustrated (especially on Cheap Cheap's level) when I was penalized for no obvious reason. Still, the excellent music and story line are enough for me to overlook the annoyances and give Parappa one of my highest recommendations of the year. Please check it out!

—DAN

I have to admit that when I first saw Parappa I thought it looked really lame, but then I played it and couldn't help but enjoy. Sure, it's childish and silly, but that's what's good about it. Don't play this one expecting anything but a wacky, hip-hop inspired (but not accurate) title with really cool graphics. The problem is the length of the game—it's just too short.

—SHAWN

Never before has a love story between a dog and a flower been told with so much style and surreal silliness. No other console game has made me laugh this hard. The animation is imaginative beyond belief, and the music...well, you'll have Parappa's raps ringing through your head for months. If only the game were longer. I can't wait for the sequel!

—CRISPIN

Parappa certainly gets the uniqueness award this month. While pushing buttons to a beat may not seem to be a great gameplay, Parappa delivers entertainment in the form of an excellent story and kickin' rap tunes (that you WILL sing around work, whether you like it or not). Parappa's largest fault is inconsistent visual clues that help you find the beat.

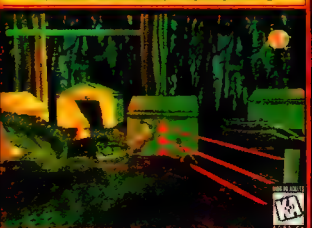
—SUSHI-X

9	10	10	9
VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY

SYSTEM: PLAYSTATION

JP: THE LOST WORLD

PUBLISHER: ELECTRONIC ARTS



CATEGORY: ACTION

PREVIEWED: EGM #94

BEST FEATURE: ANIMATION

WORST FEATURE: CONTROL

ALSO TRY: SPIDER

One of the vital ingredients in any decent platform-action game is control, an ingredient needlessly left out of The Lost World. Since the recipe is incomplete, the game rates lower than its potential. It's unfortunate, since The Lost World has almost everything else going for it. The animation is silky smooth; the backgrounds are rendered beautifully. The sound effects and music work together to re-create the perfect Lost World atmosphere in your living room. The respectable enemy AI is a welcome addition to the genre. But the frustration you'll get when you play this game for a few hours may make you forget about all of the frills and thrills. You will miss jumps, you will fall to your death, you will step on sharp objects...you will get frustrated. This is all due to the imprecise controls, the seemingly inaccurate collision detection and the tough level designs. After a while, you may decide that looking for secrets down hidden paths is just too tough, so you'll just run straight ahead to the end of the level (which can be a challenge in itself). If you practice and learn the level layouts, you may enjoy your Lost World experience...if you are the patient type. The Lost World is definitely in the upper echelon of 2.5-D action games. Just make sure you don't have an ulcer or high blood pressure.

—DAN

From the get-go I liked the way this game looked—the intro with all of its cool tech-jargon along with great graphics were awesome. So then there's the game itself. Once again the graphics and animation were sweet, but the control was too sensitive. You'd jump on a ledge, barely hit the D-pad and fall off. Still, it's a solid game with cool secrets.

—SHAWN

With its ultrarealistic dino animation, flashy cinematics and "guest star" secret ending, Lost World is a slick package. Too bad the gameplay isn't so hot. Some stages are ridiculously unforgiving—especially the human levels, where you suffer too many one-hit deaths despite having a full Health Meter. Your dino's animation often makes for loose control, too.

—CRISPIN

Without a doubt, this is a highly respectable game, though limited in gameplay. The variety of animals is good, but I bet several fans would have liked to have used a few more. My biggest problem is the human level, where even the slightest mistake means certain death. I never knew a rocket launcher couldn't take out a T-Rex! A little realism is in order.

—SUSHI-X

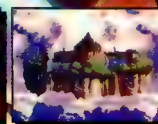
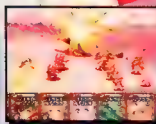
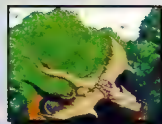
8	9	6	5
VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY

ALBERT ODYSSEY

LEGEND OF ELDEAN



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Tricks Of The Trade

Triple Play 98

—by Electronic Arts
for PlayStation

Strike Out Trick

If you'd like to win this game by really cheap means, then this trick is for you! Start your game, and when the computer opponent is batting, press Start to pause the game and at the Pause Menu, highlight "Select Controllers" and move your controller to the other team. Now take control of the batter and move him all the way down and way to the side of the box. Now you can either wait for the computer to pitch and just don't swing, or you can take control of your original team and throw some low strikes, which the computer will have a hard time hitting. Either way, you should be able to easily strike out your opponent with ease. Keep doing this throughout the game, and you'll be sure to win. Just make sure you switch back to your original team before the game ends.

Anthony J. Salvador
Livonia, MI

NBA HANG TIME

—by Midway
for Super Nintendo

Hidden Player

On the "Choose Option" Screen, press the Enter Name Option. Now, press Start and enter the name **NILS** and then exit. On the next screen, enter the numbers **5555**. You will now have access to a world record holder, secret player Nils has hidden attributes, but he's an awesome player on the court!

Matt Douglas
Mtn. View, CA



TOSHINDEN 3

—by Playmates
for PlayStation

Random Select

Go to the Player Selection Screen, and hold the top L1, L2, R1 and R2 buttons for a random selection of characters.

Ken Rauld
W. Palm Harbor, FL

JET MOTO

ENABLE CODES, ENDINGS, ETC.

You must first do the "Codes Enabled" trick. To do this, go to the Options and set the difficulty to Professional, and the Laps Per Race to 6. Press Start after you're done and at the Title Screen, press Circle, Circle, Circle, Square, Triangle, Triangle, Square, Triangle. You will hear a sound and there will be a word balloon displaying

"Codes Enabled." Now you can enter any of these codes on the Title Screen:

2 Player vs. CPU: Circle, Square, R2, Circle, Triangle, L2, Right, Up.
Unlimited Turbos: Triangle, Circle, Right, R2, Up, Square, Up, Triangle.

Double Stunt Points: Right, Up, Circle, L2, Triangle, Circle, R1, R2.
Rocket Racer: Triangle, Up, Up, L2, L2, Up, Up, Up.

No Resistance: Square, L1, Triangle, Right, L1, Down, R2, Triangle.

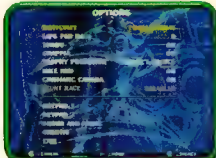
Super Ability: Down, Circle, Left, L1, Left, Right, Left, Right.

Air Brakes: R1, R2, Right, L2, Up, Circle, Up, Circle.

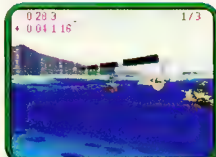
Ice Racing: Up, R2, R1, Right, L1, Square, Right, Right.

Multiple Camera Angles: Triangle, Down, Square, Triangle, L1, L1, R1, R1.

The next set of codes are



Go into the Options Screen and set it to Professional and 6 Laps.



You'll be able to get weird camera angles when you enter the code.

entered at the Title Screen and do not need the previous code enabler to make them work:

Special Dedication: Choose Dakota, then return to the Title Screen. Go to the Options and set the number of laps to 2 and trophy presenter to Female. Hold R2 and select Credits.

View All Endings: Go to Options. Set difficulty to Amateur, turn off Turbos and Grapples, hold L2 and select Credits.

Present All Riders: Go to Options. Set difficulty to Amateur, turn off Turbos and Grapples.



Do the rest of the code here to get the "Codes Enabled" balloon.



View the endings of all the characters by entering the trick shown.



You can go through the presentation of trophies to all the players! hold L1 and select Credits.

Jon Kade
Grosse Pointe Woods, MI

System: PlayStation Publisher: SCEA

K-1: THE ARENA FIGHTERS

BOSS STRENGTH, SEE ENDING

These tricks will give you a few new options to utilize.

Boss Code: Choose "Team Battle" from the Main Menu Screen. When the Character Select Screen appears, press Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Left, Right, Start. Master Ishii Will appear to the right of the other fighters.

Strength Adjust: During a match, press Start to pause. Then press L2, R1, L1, R1, L2, R1. You will see numbers flashing on the left and right side. Use the directional pad to move the numbers up or down for each character so you can increase or decrease your chosen player's strength between 1 and 9.

See the Ending: Turn on the PlayStation with the K-1 disc inside. Now hold L1+L2+Triangle+Circle+Left on both controllers while the game loads. Continue to hold these



In a Team Battle, do the code and you'll access Master Ishii!



Adjust your strength accordingly right in the middle of a fight! buttons until the demo begins. Instead of the normal introduction, you will be treated to the ending cinema, complete with the game credits. This cinema will show



This secret character has his own stage, and is extremely powerful.



See how the game was made with the automatic ending cinema. what the fighters had to go through in the development of the game.

Stephen Ruzicka
Lakeville, MN

System: PlayStation Publisher: T-HQ

NHL 97

CHEAT MODE AND NET TEAMS

While waiting for the puck to drop during the faceoff, press **L1, L2, R1** followed by one of the buttons below for various results:

- X:** Speeds up gameplay
 - L1:** Increased penalties
 - R1:** Increased penalty shots
 - L2:** More accurate shots
 - R2:** Easy goals
- For net teams enter



Once you put in the cheat, the word "Entered" will appear.

NETHOCKEY at the Name Entry Screen.

—via the Internet

System: PlayStation Publisher: Electronic Arts

XEVIOUS 3D/G+

INCREASE CREDITS

This code will give you an increased number of credits to help you get farther in the game. At the Game Select Screen, hold **L1-L2-R1** and **R2** simultaneously. With these held, press the Circle button continuously until the game loads up. Normally, you start with two credits. But the more times you press the Circle



Enter the code and you will have an increased amount of credits.

button before it loads, the more credits you will receive!

System: PlayStation Publisher: Namco

STREET FIGHTER EX + ALPHA

HIDDEN BONUS BARREL GAME

To get the bonus barrel game, go to the Mode Select Menu and highlight "Practice." Press Start, then Up, Up, Right, Up, Right, Up and Start again. A message will appear that says, "Here Comes a New Game Mode." Now go into Practice Mode and you will see a new option called "Bonus Game." Choose any character, and you



Try to beat your high score within the time provided as any character!

will be playing the bonus barrel stage from Street Fighter III

—via the Internet

System: PlayStation Publisher: Capcom

TUROK

DEFORMED TUROK

On the Title Screen, go to the "Enter Cheat" Screen and enter the Big Cheat code:

NTHGTHDGD CRTDTRK

Now, turn on Spirit Mode, All Weapons and Unlimited Ammo. Now warp to the Campaigner. Stand still and shoot him with the minigun. Once he dies, and Turok runs away, look at his bent leg!



What happened to Turok's leg? Did it get broken fighting the Boss?

Garrett Gooch
Memphis, TN

System: Nintendo 64 Publisher: Acclaim

When he asks
for a donut,



PITBALL

VIEW FMV, HIDDEN GAME

To view all the FMVs without completing the game with each of the characters, go to the Options and highlight the FMV Test. Now press Left, Right, Square, Circle. Now you can watch any ending.

To access a hidden game, go into the FMV test where the endings are, and on any FMV, press Square+Circle



In the hidden game, you must destroy the asteroids in time!
together. The ship you get will depend on the FMV you previously chose.

System: PlayStation Publisher: Accolade

PEAK PERFORMANCE

SOCCER BALL TRICK

Go into the course editor. While holding the X button, press Triangle to make your cone white. Place the white cone on the course. Repeat as necessary, depending on how many cones you have left in your inventory. Now choose your car and start the race. The white cones will have turned into soccer balls, which



Smack some soccer balls around with your car on the custom course.
you can run into with your car!
David Sheffield
Derby, KS

System: PlayStation Publisher: Atlas

STAR WARS: S.O.T.E.

WAMPA ROAR

Choose a new slot or edit an existing player by putting in the code: **R . Testers . ROCK** (put a space where the periods are shown). Once you do this, exit the screen and move up and down between different options. You will hear the Wampas roar up a storm when you do this; even when you pause the game.



Put in this code as your player's name and you'll get the roar!

Benjamin Yavitz
St. Louis, MO

System: Nintendo 64 Publisher: Nintendo

DARKLIGHT CONFLICT

LAST LEVEL CODE

Now you can access the last level automatically with this password. On the Main Menu screen, highlight and select the Password Option. Now enter the code as shown here:

DLGXKDJDH

Once you choose End, you'll be transported to the last level of the game, "The Escape Home" which is extremely difficult! Try

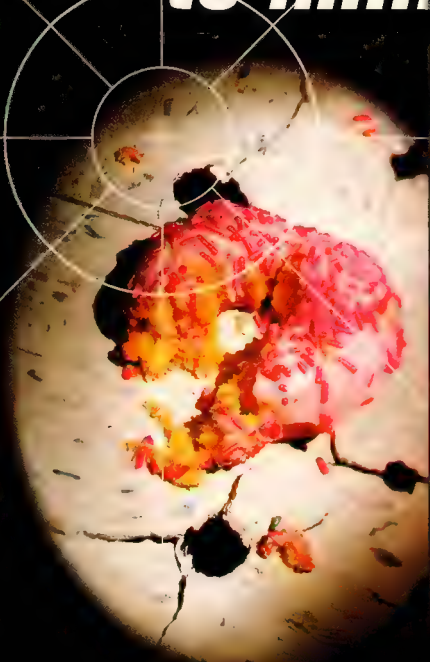


At the Password Screen, enter the code as shown for this hard level

to survive as long as you can!
Howard Justin; Jonesburg, MO

System: PlayStation Publisher: Electronic Arts

give it to him.



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N64 + CF 63 1/3

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We got cool all Breakthrough Environments. That means I can toss your sorry butt out of a window and then kick it again on the other side.

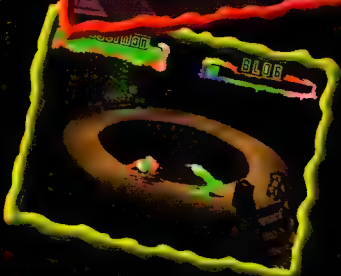
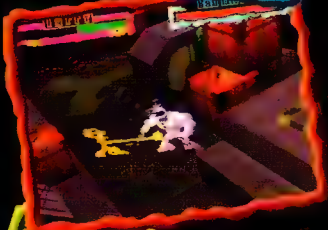
We have 12 kick-ass clay fighters, 3D environments, and free-floating camera angles. What do the others got?

We don't have any palette-swapped ninjas, no boring humans neither.

We have secret characters so famous they can't be named due to a strict licensee gag order.

There ain't any side-scrolling 2D backgrounds (Claymodo is 3D). Yeah, and no corner traps either.

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SEPTEMBER



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Gamers have been battling console AI for 20 years. We look at two genres—sports and fighting—to find out who's winning and why.

THE WAR ON AI

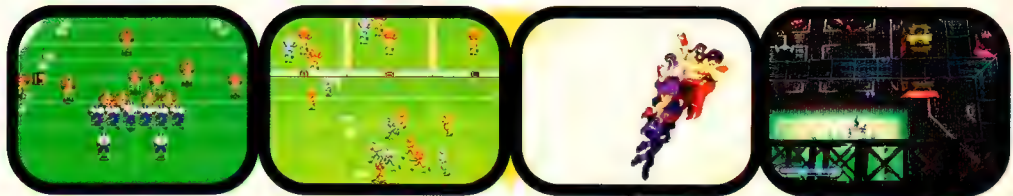
by Kraig Kujawa and Sushi-X

The three dragons of the classic Atari 2600 proto RPG Adventure sure were a pain in the ass. One whiff of your blip-shaped hero and they'd launch after you, around corners, across game screen after game screen, relentless in their quest to turn you into lunch.

They were tenacious, yes. But were they particularly brainy? Not really. Their puny logic algorithms could be boiled down into a few commands: See the hero, eat the hero, repeat if necessary. But stupid or not, this trio of toothy sprites represented one of the first examples of artificial intelligence in a console game. And we've been running from dragons in one form or another—from Pac-Man's gang of ghosts to Doom's army of Imps—ever since.

Yet our 20-year war with AI has never been one-sided. Given time, gamers have always learned the tricks to survival in the inhospitable terrain of single-player video

ILLUSTRATION BY COLIN JOHNSON



gamedom. We've mastered the cheap stuff—fireballs and throws—that'll topple most CPU-controlled fighting game foes, and we learned there's no reason to fear any Boss in any action game, once we learn its attack patterns. Of course, we don't want enemies that are too brainy. Where's the fun in an invincible opponent? But then we don't want 'em too easy to outsmart, either.

So where does AI stand today, 20 years after the first volleys were fired in the war between players and console CPUs? Most modern game enemies are Einsteins compared to Adventure's simple-minded dragons, but is it still too easy to learn the AI's tricks? To answer this question, we looked at two genres—sports and fighting—and examined how their AI has adapted to human players' winning strategies over the years.

Why those two game types? Simple. It is the computer-controlled enemies of fighting and sports games that—more than in any other genre—serve as our practice partners for gaming's toughest challenge: head-to-head competition between two human players. And while computer-controlled opponents are still not nearly as bright as your game-playing buddies, the day when you won't be able to tell a flesh-and-blood player two from the CPU may be closer than you think.



Just a Bunch of Dumb Jocks?

► MADDEN: THE DAWN OF REALISTIC SPORTS GAMING

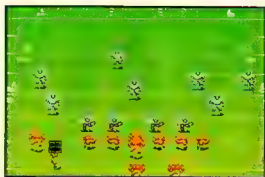
Ever since the dawn of sports gaming, human players have time and again run up the score on their less competent computer adversaries. After years of gaming that have spawned many progressively better hardware systems, we've seen more glitz, better sound and fancy 3-D graphics. What we haven't seen is a major improvement in the artificial intelligence...until now.

Many sports gamers complain

a scant year's time whereas in past years, progress in sports gaming AI has been stagnant (or has even taken steps back). Some may say it is because of technology that games are able to become more sophisticated. While this is true, past 16-bit sports games weren't half as smart as they could have been.

The best example of this is EA Sports' Madden series. It personifies sports gaming as a whole and was the undisputed leader

The day when you won't be able to tell a flesh-and-blood player two from the CPU may be closer than you think.



HERE'S THE FIRST CONSOLE VERSION OF JOHN MADDEN FOOTBALL ON THE GENESIS THAT STARTED THE REALISTIC SPORTS REVOLUTION.

of sports gaming through the glorious 16-bit days. Where that game went, most followed. When Madden is being discussed, it's like discussing the genre as a whole. You see, John Madden Football was a revolutionary game when it arrived. It played more like real football than anything else on the market, bar none. Just about every football game you play (or even non-football sports games) has many elements of Madden in it.

Scott Orr, now executive producer at EA Sports, was one of the creators of the first console Madden (on the Genesis). He explained that "the philosophy was to build (the first Madden) from the bottom up...we started with the AI and built (the game) around it." If successive sports games incorporated that same design philosophy for the years following, the results would have been impressive. Obviously (and unfortunately), that wasn't the case.

After the first few years of steady improvement, most of the changes and new "improvements" in subsequent versions of Madden consisted of different graphics and plays. The computer didn't get smarter, and some might even argue that it got dumber. This was also true of just about every competing product. The focus of football games seemed to shift to graphics, bells and whistles, and name-brand licenses.

about games with the intelligence equivalent to a potato, but we are partially to blame. You see, good artificial intelligence doesn't make a flashy, eye-catching picture on the back of a game box. It won't give customers that immediate impulse in the software store to buy a game like aesthetic features would. But, with all of the new competition crawling out of the woodwork to get their hands on a piece of the lucrative sports gaming pie (sports games make up about 50 percent of console software sales), the competition in this market is hotter than ever before. Companies are being forced to pay attention to every facet of a game in order to keep or gain their competitive edge. Perhaps that is why we're seeing such huge AI leaps in

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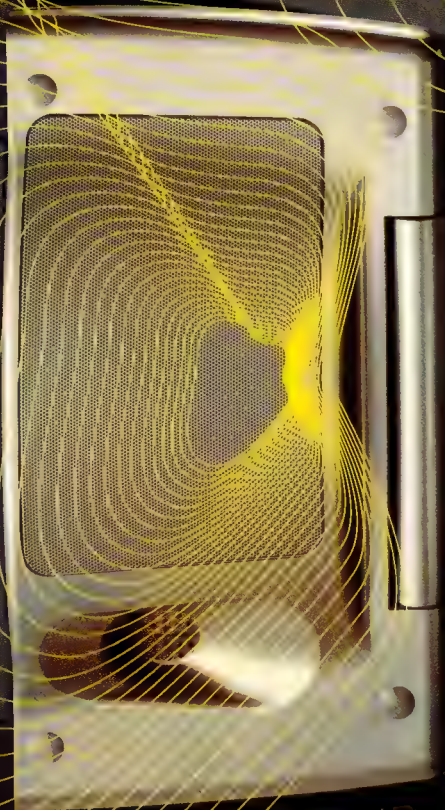
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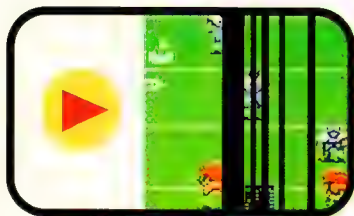


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► SHOW ME THE MONEY PLAYS

The result? "Money Plays" became as big a feature as any other in a football game. The minute avid video football gamers got their hands on the next Madden (or any other pigskin title), the first thing to do would be to find the Almighty Money Plays that would be imbedded within the playbook. Those who found the Money Plays could immediately start walloping the computer by three times its own score. Once some of the other nuances in the game were exposed, that no longer was a challenge. The new mountain to climb would be trying to score 100 points in five-minute quarters, or to make the computer look silly by having negative yards in offense when the game was done. The sad fact is that all of these goals were easily possible to reach.

► THE EVOLUTION OF DEFENSE

Obviously, the dubious invention of "Money Plays" is a result of poor AI. But why exactly? Let's take the circumstance of broken defensive pass coverage. When you pick the perfect defense to cover an offensive play and have the personnel to run it (assuming the breakdown isn't your fault) multiple wide receivers should not be wide open. But in past Madden games they were—and repeatedly. Depending on what version of Madden you're playing, this could be due to many problems. In early Maddens, defenders were "hard coded to defend certain positions such as WR1 (Wide Receiver 1), WR2, etc.," according to Steve Sims, producer of Madden NFL 98. This would cause horrendous defensive problems, as putting people in motion and overloading receivers to one side would cause all sorts of defensive mismatches and imbalances. For instance, WR1 (wide receiver) is usually split out to the left. This receiver was coded to be guarded by CB1 (cornerback 1), who is usually also on the left. If WR1 is moved in motion prior to the snap to the right, CB1 would still stay on the left. This would create a large window for WR1 to be left wide open while CB1 scurried to cover him after the ball is snapped. WR1 will be on the right side of the field, while CB1 is still on the left side.

By Madden 94, this obvious flaw was patched up by directing the appropriate defenders to follow the wide receivers in motion before the ball is snapped. This helped defensive "Man-to-Man" coverage on balance, but still other flaws remained. Zone coverage is the defensive coverage used most in the NFL. It involves dividing up sections of the defensive backfield for each defender to cover. In early Maddens, crudely defined zones made by a field divided up in checkerboard-like dimensions would require that a defender sit in the middle of the said square zone and then wait for an offensive player to enter their territory. Once an offensive player entered into the square zone, the defender would follow him around in it. According to Sims, "It is a zone defense, but it's the first progression of it. The defense doesn't take into account offensive balance and what they're attacking you with." The result? The early zone defenses of Madden could be easily decimated by flooding

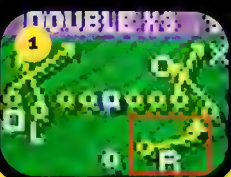
How Much Time is Put Into AI?

The typical development cycle of a sports game is about 10 months, give or take a month. Usually, after a sports game is finished, the game production team takes a little time off to cool down, and then starts to create the next edition of the series. What may surprise you (or actually may not) is the amount of emphasis and time that is spent on developing the game's artificial intelligence.

According to Scott Orr, "In the past, AI typically is one of the last things that you work on because you're trying to upgrade and put a lot of energy into improving the graphics, frame rate and adding new features. AI and tuning tends to take a back seat." Back seat, indeed. When asked about the percentage of Madden Football's development cycle that is spent on AI, Orr replied, "Typically it's probably 10 percent (for every version of Madden). This year was different for EA, as they shifted more emphasis toward the brains of the product. 'We took the approach of AI first. This year we were able to fix past problems and take it to a new level.' Bringing the game to this 'new level' involved working on the AI in the beginning of the development cycle (for the first time), and devoting 'at least 25 percent of the schedule to it (the AI),' according to Orr. They also expect to use just as much time (if not more) working on improvements on the AI for Madden 99. The results of devoting extra time on the brains of the game two years in a row should be interesting, indeed.

the zone with multiple receivers and by running certain patterns (such as crossing patterns) that would always find the seam (where there shouldn't be seams) in the very predictable zone coverages. To give defenses a new weapon to combat these type of breakdowns, a "Man/Zone" defense was added in Madden 95 and Madden 98 (and all others that followed it) that would place defenders in zones, and then cover whichever offensive player entered it. Instead of only covering the player inside of the zone, Man/Zone coverage would allow that player to follow the offensive player anywhere on the field.

The biggest step in making defensive coverages realistic was taken in Madden 98. Here, defensive coverages became dynamic and, well, artificially



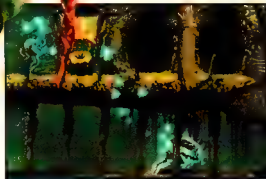
★ **MONEY PLAYS** ★

THIS IS ONE OF THE MANY MONEY PLAYS YOU'LL FIND IN MADDEN 97. MADDEN GAMES GENERALLY HAVE HAD TROUBLE COVERING RUNNING BACKS, AS SEEN HERE.

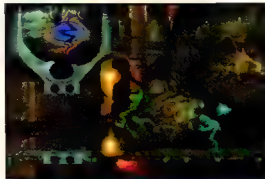
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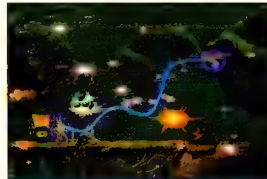
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see the slig. be the slig.



a quantum leap in gameplay.



it's a hostile takeover.

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against the deep bomb, or bump-and-run to protect against the short pass. Double-teaming defenses may have a safety shade deep while having the cornerback cover short. It is important to note that although the defensive players and plays are this intelligent, they don't make up for an ill-advised play. In summarization, this new, smarter defense implements the defensive play you call in the best possible fashion. If you call a defense that should work, it will work (given you have capable players). Steve Sims summed it up well by saying, "This is the first Madden game where John Madden could watch the video game being played and dissect it just as he would a real football game." This is unlike so many Madden games before it, where well-called defenses would fail due to bad computer intelligence.

► PLAYING SMART

Play calling is one of the biggest chess matches in football, and to this

tion in addition to plays that have worked in the duration in that game. If the computer was successful in completing a slant pass during 2nd and long, then the next time that situation occurs there will be a good probability that it will choose to run that play again. There is an element of randomness to the play selection, so it may pick another play that is suited for that situation. The same thought processes are used during defense play selection. Why hasn't play selection gotten more advanced? According to Sims, "People have tried to do historical analysis (looking at the last five plays to analyze and call a play), but it comes up cheesy. When you do fake punt five times, it (the computer) goes into a punt defense, and then you can go long." If you do play a game that seems to know all of the right plays to call, be aware that some games may cheat by letting the computer see the offensive play you pick, then going to a defense pre-programmed to stop it.

Play calling is one of the biggest chess matches in football, and to this day it remains one of the most simplistic AI routines in football games.

MONEY PLAYS EXISTED IN THE FIRST MADDEN (LEFT) AND IN MADDEN 97 (PREVIOUS PAGE). HAS AI REALLY PROGRESSED MUCH IN THOSE YEARS?

intelligent. The new Madden defenses shift and adjust their zones to accommodate the strengths and positions of the offensive formation on the field. The zones are no longer in a square shape, giving them flexibility and efficiency when covering the field. The defensive players on the field read the offense to an extent, and pick the appropriate portions of the field to cover. In addition to covering the right parts of the field, the way that defenders cover receivers is also more real and complex. Now, a defensive player may "shade" his coverage to protect

day it remains one of the most simplistic AI routines in football games. In early Maddens play calling was quite simple. A situational matrix would define what type of defensive or offensive play would be used in conjunction with a play-calling profile for that team. In Madden 98, play calling hasn't progressed that much, but what's in place does work pretty well. The computer uses the opponent's team profile and its own when considering a play. If you're using Green Bay, for example, it will always consider that the Packers are more apt to pass. With this in mind, the computer considers the game situa-

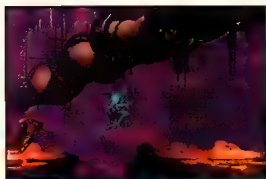
► NOT-SO-HOT PURSUIT

When creating the AI for a game, it is important not to overlook the small details of gameplay when working on more sophisticated facets of the game. For example, EA hired someone to adapt a piece of code that he programmed to work with Madden. This code was specifically made to make defenders "swarm" after offensive players in a realistic manner. This worked out well, but what was overlooked was the flawed head-to-head defensive pursuit in Madden NFL 97. If an offensive player is running into the defensive secondary, the defenders would angle toward the ball carrier for the tackle. Unfortunately, due to some AI problems, the defenders would take the wrong angle to intercept the ball carrier, leaving the defender a second behind where he should have been to cut off and tackle him. This was a humorous AI bug that would often create a large train of dumb defensive players to follow the ball carrier. The

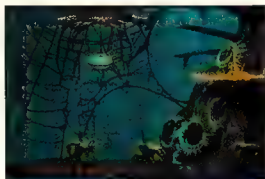
In other games enemies are evil.
In Oddworld, they're moody, territorial, lazy, hungry,
fickle, paranoid *and* evil.



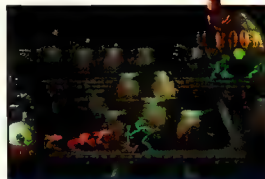
If you don't know what makes other characters tick, they just might explode.
Sound Odd? Welcome to Oddworld.



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whole scene makes the ball carrier appear as a Pied Piper because the defenders took the wrong pursuit angles, causing them to fall behind him. The reason that this happened was because the game's AI wasn't predicting the future properly. As producer Steve Sims explains in simplistic terms, "Velocity equals distance over time." By using a formula based on that, defenders can calculate where a player will be, and what angle he should take. Obviously, these algorithms weren't

All Brawl and No Brains?

OK, enough with the team sports. Let's see what AI's been up to on the meaner side of gaming's railroad tracks, in the mano-a-mano land of fighting games. Here, the AI's attention isn't scattered among the squads of opponents found in sports and action titles. Every megabit of the game's brain is focused on guiding one character—your opponent—who must fight with all the chop-socky skill, tenacity and unpredictability of a human player, or the game just ain't worth playing.

There are a million ways for CPU-controlled combatants to fight stupidly. They might let themselves be hammered over and over again by the same attack patterns. They might fight cheaply, using throws, projectiles and combos to drain your life gauge before you even land a punch. And they might fall victim to the same cheap tactics from human players.

Fighting game fanatics have seen all these flaws before. And so have we. So we decided to take a look—from a player's perspective—at how AI has evolved in fighting games, as well as how gamers have learned the tricks of each new generation of supposedly smarter enemies. To keep things simple, we focused on the family of 2-D fighters that has eaten the most quarters in the last decade: the Street Fighter series.

► STREET FIGHTER

The CPU-controlled opponents in this 1987 granddaddy of fighting games weren't exactly brainiacs. They each had about five patterns of attack and would follow them religiously. Adon, for example, would always start off the round with a flip kick, then unleash several other powerful, predetermined attacks. So success in Street Fighter depended more on rote memorization of opponent's moves rather than any special button and joystick combinations.



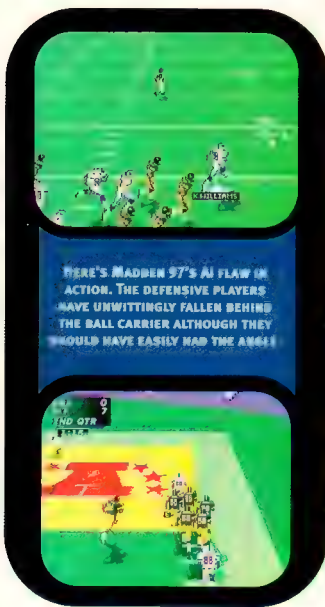
NEITHER KEN NOR RYU WERE ALL THAT BRIGHT IN THE ORIGINAL STREET FIGHTER.

But then, the game that gave us Ryu, Ken and the fireball can be forgiven for being a little dumb.

► STREET FIGHTER II

No more Mr. Dumb World Warrior. The opponents in this blockbuster were brilliant compared to the pattern-following drones of the first game. They made up their own patterns and didn't skip on the special moves.

Trouble is, some of them performed their specials a little too well. The computer-controlled Guile, for instance, never seemed bound by the same rules that players had to obey. He never needed to charge his Sonic Boom projectiles or Flash Kicks for the requisite two-second limit imposed on all players. Guile just pulled them

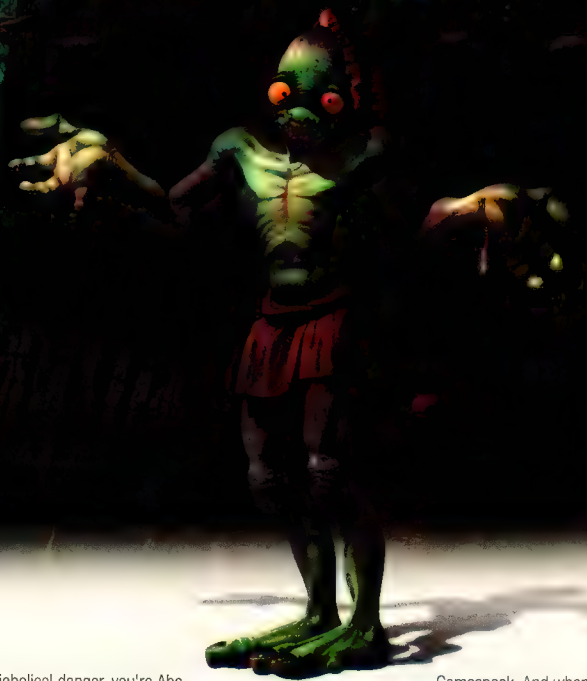


working in Madden 97. Fortunately, they work fine in Madden 98.

► ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

Although there has been much progress in sports gaming AI in the last year, there's still plenty of room for improvement. For example, Sims admits that Madden Football's play calling "is still an area in which we can improve." But that's only one of many areas in only one genre of sports. Whether it's a football, hockey, or basketball game, chances are that it isn't as smart a sports game as it should be. But as consumers, your gaming dollars have the power to demand a better product, and it seems that companies such as EA are beginning to listen.

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off over and over again, thus making him almost as annoying to fight as Bosses Vega and Bison. Blanka's horizontal roll was another example of a charge move that the AI could perform immediately. So just as the characters became smarter, they became cheaper, too.

No matter. Players soon learned that certain patterns would defeat even the cheapest of the World Warriors. When battling Zangief, for instance, players could simply leap up with Ryu/Ken, perform a Roundhouse Kick, and the big Russian would walk into the attack every time. In a way, the pattern problem of the first game was reversed. Now it was the player who could rely on the same attacks over and over again, while the computer opponents remained unable to cope with the repetitive onslaught.

► STREET FIGHTER II CHAMPION EDITION

Capcom watched as the World Warriors were beaten again and again by player-created patterns. So, sure enough, those same patterns didn't work in the Champion Edition. No big deal for players, though—they created new patterns that were just as effective. For example, they would leap just out of range of Guile's Flash Kick, then Dargon Punch him while he was in mid-air.

Meanwhile, the AI grew less cheap. We began to see the CPU-guided fighters

at least attempt to simulate charge moves. Guile, for instance, would chug down for a split second before unleashing a Sonic Boom. No, he didn't wait the required two seconds before letting it fly, but it was a step in the right direction.

► STREET FIGHTER II TURBO HYPER FIGHTING

Despite the increase in speed, this installment was actually a little easier for players. Now, not only could they rely on the same attack patterns they used in the Champion Edition, but Ken and Ryu players also had the advantage of the new Air Hurricane Kicks (you know, the Hurricane Kick you could pull off at the top of a jump). Computer-controlled opponents simply did not know how to defend themselves from these strikes.

As if to make up for this weakness, we began to see the computer perform more throws. Chun-Li, Zangief and Guile were especially keen on grabbing and throwing players who were halfway through a move (a tactic frequently used by the AI opponents in the MK series, as well).

► SUPER STREET FIGHTER II

The series' AI saw some major improvements here. For starters, the fighters began to implement their own combos, although they would rarely land more than two hits in a chain. They were

also more than able to deal with Ryu and Ken's Air Hurricane Kicks, so such cheap airborne tactics were not nearly as effective as in the previous game.

The bumping up of the game's IQ meant that computer-controlled enemies didn't have to battle so cheaply. For the first time, charges were accurately simulated by enemies (Guile began to play by the rules). Players were finally starting to feel some real heat from the AI.



HERE COME THE COMBO! SUPER SFII'S FIGHTERS FOUGHT SMART, NOT CHEAP.

► SUPER STREET FIGHTER II TURBO

And then there came the most difficult game in the series (even when it was set to easy!). The AI in Super SFII Turbo was top notch. In fact, industry legend has it that it was based on the number-one player in the world.

This edition's enemies pulled off combos every chance they got—and they did so nearly perfectly every time. They also countered most attacks with perfect timing and skill (no, not with Alpha Counters—those hadn't been invented yet—but with blocks and quick sweeps and punches).



SMART PLAYERS FOUND PATTERNS TO DEFEAT SFII'S GUILE. SUCH PATTERNS WEREN'T SO EFFECTIVE IN LATER GAMES.

Straight Shooters: When Dumb is More Fun



IF VIOLENT SEED'S BIG BUG BOSS WERE ANY SMARTER, THE GAME WOULD BE TOO HARD AND NO FUN.

Sometimes it ain't a bad idea to make enemy artificial intelligence a little, well, less intelligent. Take the case of shooters, in which it has always been dumb enemies—and lots of 'em—that have kept players twitching in their seats.


"In traditional 2-D shooters, the baddies follow a preset pattern," said programmer Brian Leake, who's working on Rabid Entertainment's impressive 3-D, top-down shooter Violent Seed. "The programmers will either use a wave editor or they'll just code in some behavior that tells enemies to fly in a straight line for a couple of seconds, then make a loop to the left or the right, and then they'll just fly off screen and go away."

Shooter fans wouldn't have it any other way, right? After all, imagine how frustrating it would be to play a shooter in which the enemies were as intelligent as the programmers could make them. "They're capable of just chasing you and chasing you and matching your speed and locking onto you and not letting go," Leake said. "If you've just got wave after wave of all these smart enemies it's rather difficult to play. So we have to make them a little more stupid, make them not fire so often or introduce a random element to where they turn and where they fire at you."

Some of these "random elements" include imposing a limit on how long enemies can home in on your fighter before they abandon the chase, or giving them enough sense to flee the screen if you shoot in their direction or lock on with a missile.

But the simplest trick of all, Leake explained, is to let the enemies show off their smarts for a little while, then dummy 'em down when life gets too rough for the player. "The baddies can be clever for a bit," he said, "and then we just say, 'OK, now all you can do is fly in a straight line and go away.'"

SHEAR TERROR



It's one thing to take a bullet like a man but how does one take 3-foot long, razor sharp scissors? How will you avert decapitation and keep your entrails from spilling out over the kitchen floor? This will surely be your fate unless you can outwit Norway's most lethal killer—Scissorman. You'll have to become a master of stealth and deception to avoid being cut to ribbons in this blood-soaked horror adventure.

- Five playable characters and ten different endings for super-extended replay value.
- Amazingly detailed, horrific graphics and special effects.
- Bone-chilling sound effects.

So grab your copy of Clock Tower™, turn out the lights, and pray.



CLOCK TOWER™

► STREET FIGHTER ALPHA

Capcom apparently thought Super SFII Turbo's opponents were a little too tough, because Alpha saw a slight dumpling down of the AI. Once again, players were able to use several, easy-to-pull-off patterns to stymie most of the World Warriors. Hurricane Kicks could be used

over and over again on cornered opponents, while most enemies would absorb several fireballs before even attempting a block.

Players were also helped out with ultra-cheap Chain Combos, simple light-, medium- and fierce-punch triples that were extremely easy to perform. AI opponents, on the other hand, never attempted the chains, although they were fairly adept at unleashing first-level Super Combos and Alpha Counters.

The game's most eye-grabbing feature—its ultrasmooth animation—is actually a major hindrance to what is otherwise top-notch AI. Each enemy move packs so many frames of animation that players can tell what's coming just by watching the opponent wind up his or her attack.

Despite this handicap, the computer still makes a pretty respectable player. It comes out swinging with a wide variety of attacks and very few patterns. And while it may at first seem that the AI opponents are susceptible to player-created patterns, the CPU quickly learns from its mistakes. For instance, enemies stumble blindly into fireballs early in a round, but they wise up quickly and begin blocking—even parrying—if you unleash too many projectiles.

To make matters even more difficult, players are no longer able to perform Custom Combos, air blocks or Alpha Counters. Now they must rely on the more difficult parries, which the computer pulls off on a regular basis. AI enemies are also fairly proficient at pulling off the Super Arts, although they will nearly always pick the first Art, rather than the second or third.

Super SFII Turbo, Akuma has proven that he packs the largest arsenal of moves—and he knows how to use them. He unleashes combos, super combos, juggles and counters. He rarely wastes an

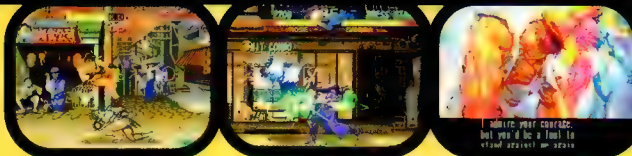


AKUMA IS THE SMARTEST, FIERCEST WORLD WARRIOR OF THE SERIES.

attack, and no patterns work on him. It should come as no surprise then that Capcom's forthcoming Super Street Fighter collection packs a special Akuma Mode, which lets you play against Akuma anytime you feel like getting your butt whupped.

► WHAT'S NEXT?

We've shown how AI can evolve through two popular genres, but what does the future hold for the brains behind our games? Well, if advance hype on Ocean's 3-D Nintendo 64 shooter Mission: Impossible is to be believed, console AI is about to take a huge leap forward. The game makes use of a new AI system called "SOOL" by Infogrames, Ocean's France-based parent company. SOOL supposedly simulates the thinking of each character in



ONE AI CRUTCH WAS TO FIGHT CHEAP (NOTE THE THROW, LEFT). BUT PLAYERS COULD BE CHEAP, TOO (CUSTOM COMBOS, ANYONE?). CHEAPEST OF ALL, THOUGH, IS SFIII'S GIL (RIGHT).

► STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 2

And the fighters became only more adept at such tactics in the sequel. Sure, they could be taken out by some of the same patterns players used in Alpha, but the patterns now had to be set up properly; players had to get in close to begin sequences of Hurricane Kicks or Dragon Punches. Computer opponents nearly always avoided such traps.

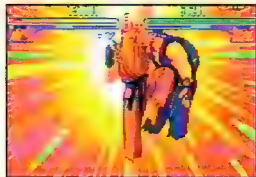
Players were helped by the Custom Super Combos, which let them string together random attacks that were impossible for the computer to defend against. No big deal for the AI; these combos were more flashy than effective.

► STREET FIGHTER III

It was a long time in coming, but players were finally able to face off against the AI of a new generation of street fighters. But here's the surprise:

So who's the smartest of the World Warriors? Well, despite his tenacity, it ain't Gil, SFIII's final Boss. This guy was built to fight cheap, not smart. All his moves do two hits, forcing you to parry twice. And he seems to automatically block anything you throw at him. Yes, battling Gil is frustrating to say the least.

The honor of smartest AI has to go to Akuma, a.k.a. Gouki in Japan. Since



III IS THE PRETTIEST SF GAME, BUT IT'S NOT EXACTLY THE SMARTEST.



MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE'S SOOL-DRIVEN ENEMIES ARE EXPECTED TO BE THE SMARTEST EVER.

the game, letting them react intelligently to the player's actions. If the player acts suspiciously or pulls out his gun, the game's bystanders will steer clear and guards will open fire. If SOOL lives up to its hype, it could change the way players treat enemies in Doom clones forever.

Even with advancements such as SOOL on the gaming horizon, has AI stayed in step with all the other advancements in console technology? Not really. But it's certainly catching up. And heck, as Akuma has proven, it's smart enough to school you in Street Fighter. ■

A close-up, high-contrast photograph of a crocodile's head, focusing on its mouth and nostrils. The image is dominated by the bright orange and yellow glow of the crocodile's teeth and the flared nostrils, set against a dark, shadowed background. The texture of the crocodile's skin is visible, showing a rough, scaly pattern. The lighting creates a dramatic, almost fiery effect, emphasizing the predatory nature of the animal.

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bite and dismember your way

up the pre-historic



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INCAPABLE OF REMORSE.



CREATIVE FEATURE

by Dan Hsu



DEMON VS. DEMON. EVIL VS. EVIL. WHY IS EVERYONE FIGHTING?



It's Halloween time Kiddies! We here at Electronic **MAIMING** Monthly would like to offer you a little treat. We're going to do a

special **ARTIKILL** on the creatures of video gaming! (Whoops! Sorry...we've been watching a few too many episodes of *Tales from the Crypt*.)

Anyway, we brought together 10 games that fit in with the **HALLOWEEN** theme. You might wonder why some of these games are included in a Halloween feature, but when you read the article, you'll understand.

But instead of doing a straightforward preview of these Halloweeny games, we decided to have some fun with this feature. We thought it would be interesting to see what would happen if some of these video game characters got together and actually fought each other. After all, they are, for the most part, **EVIL BEINGS**. And we all know what evil beings do when they get together (fight, naturally).

So we asked ourselves, what would happen if the **ZOMBIES** of Resident Evil were at war with the monsters of Nightmare Creatures? Who would win in a skirmish between the **DEMONS** of Doom and the soldiers of Quake? Read on to see what our silly little minds conjured up. Feel free to send in some of your own ideas for battles you'd like to see.





RESIDENT EVIL MONSTERS

Pros

- Giant Monsters
- Popular support and backing from legions of R.E. fans

Cons

- Those slow-ass zombies
- R.E. monsters have never left the house. (Babes in the woods, you know?)



NIGHTMARE CREATURES

Pros

- Monsters are good in one-on-one fights
- They have lasting power

Cons

- Not much...the Nightmare Creatures are pretty formidable

One final confrontation: Who would win in a fight between the hordes of the Resident Evil series and the armies of Nightmare Creatures? It's a close call, but the Nightmare Creatures would eventually win. The monsters of Resident Evil are impressive, but they have a weak link: the slow and predictable zombies. Capcom has a full chess set here (with the zombies being the pawns), but Activision's side only has knights, rooks, bishops and higher—no wimpy pawns to get in the way.

The Nightmare Creatures do not attack like most computer-controlled opponents. They block, they sidestep, they draw back...you just can't attack them as straightforward as you can enemies in most other games. Not only that, but they continue to aggressively fight after losing several limbs. Talk about persistence!

But this would not be an easy win. Giant spiders, gargantuan snakes and demon hounds will make up most of Resident Evil's offensive force, and they would take out a big chunk of the enemy forces. But the great one-on-one abilities of the Nightmare Creatures would win the war for Activision.

When we first came up with the idea of a Halloween feature, the first game (or series of games, actually) we thought of was Resident Evil. And why wouldn't we? Everyone has RE on the mind because Capcom is putting out so many versions of the game. Besides the original for the PlayStation, we will soon have Resident Evil for the Saturn, Resident Evil: Director's Cut (PS) and of course, Resident Evil 2 for the PS. As such, it's only fitting that we start out this feature with the popular series of horror games.

Resident Evil is a perfect Halloween game with its hordes of larger-than-life creatures and trademark flesh-eating zombies. The original always kept you in suspense as you went from room to room in the large and abandoned mansion (abandoned by non-evil beings, anyway). And who can forget the first time a bloody-mouthed zombie turned around to face you? Director's Cut and RE2 only promise more gore and frightful moments.

Activision's Nightmare Creatures for the PlayStation is a full 3-D action game that takes place in a nightmarish gothic world.

Moving at fast speeds with complete freedom of movement, Nightmare Creatures may give gamers what they felt they were missing in slower-paced 3-D action games.

Nightmare Creatures doesn't provide the same level of fright that some of the other games in this feature do (after all, it's an action game, not an adventure game like RE). But it belongs in this article nonetheless. The hordes of mythical creatures that roam Nightmare Creatures'

world can certainly be classified as "creepy," as are the dark and quiet environments. When you see ethereal creatures rising from decrepit graves, you'll know why we put this game in this feature. Plus, Nightmare Creatures isn't without its suspenseful moments. At times, you might find the inactive moments a little too nerve-wracking. Then, just as you think you're safe...

ADVANTAGE: NIGHTMARE CREATURES



ENEMY ZERO'S ALIEN

Pros

- It's invisible
- In space, no one can hear you scream

Cons

- It must be a noisy alien, since you can always hear it moving around.

You might not know a lot about Enemy Zero for now, but you will. This high-profile Saturn horror/sci-fi adventure game is currently out in Japan and is expected out soon in the U.S.

The main character is Laura Lewis (the virtual star of *D*, whose voice for Enemy Zero will be played by Luscious Jackson lead singer, Jill Cunliff). Tell us if her story sounds familiar: The crew of a space station is slowly being eliminated by an alien threat. One by one, Lewis' companions are killed, until she is the only one left to confront the mysterious alien.

The game is unique because you must depend more on audible aids than visual. As the alien is hunting you aboard the isolated station, you can hear its movements. The louder the sounds, the closer you are to the creature. You must be careful of your own actions: Any sounds you make can alert the alien as to your location. Enemy Zero becomes a sweaty palm experience when your motion detector beeps louder and louder as you get closer to the alien. The scary part is, you can't see the monster—it's invisible until you are right next to it. Look for more on this suspenseful thriller in an upcoming issue.

So what happens when we pit two stalking and preying beings against each other? Well, if you've ever seen Scissorman in action, you'd have no doubt that any moron should be able to kick his ass. He's an old man who walks with an old man's pace and thinks with a 2-year-old's mind. He's easy to outrun and easy to outsmart. All you need to do is find any hiding spot, and he'll forget you're there (out of sight, out of mind, you know?). But for those of you who've played Clock Tower, doesn't Scissorman look like you could just "clock" him one in the face and put him out of commission? (Although maybe this is just macho talk...perhaps we'd have a big change of heart if we could actually meet Scissorman in real life.)

Our conclusion is, an old man running around with oversized scissors is no match for an invisible alien beast who can wipe out the entire crew of a space station. In fact, chances are Scissorman will do what every mother is always afraid of: fall and poke his eyes out with the scissors. And having a blind Scissorman is like having no Scissorman at all.

CLOCK TOWER'S SCISSORMAN

Pros

- Scissorman is persistent
- He has a scary theme song when he's chasing you

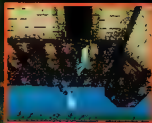
Cons

- He's not the brightest guy in the world
- He has that funny walk

Ascii's Clock Tower for the PlayStation gave more than one editor goosebumps. This suspenseful mystery/thriller was full of tense moments, thanks to the soundtrack and, of course, the menacing Scissorman.

The weak at heart may want to avoid this game. Most of the game is spent looking for clues in quiet, abandoned buildings, with a psycho killer lurking about. Your heart rate will triple when you turn around a seemingly innocent corner to face Scissorman.

Clock Tower is a perfect game to be featured in a Halloween article, and Scissorman is a perfect monster. He creeps at you with a staggered walk, looking like a stereotypical madman. He wields a long and sharp set of hedge clippers (are like tree clippers, from the looks of them). And when you see him, the game will play some pretty intense music. You'll feel like the potential victim in a slasher flick, and you'll want to get the hell out of Scissorman's way.



Sometimes you'd feel better if you could just shoot every damn thing in sight.

(BUT THEN THERE'S THAT DEATH PENALTY THING.)

Time to lock and load, pal. Straight from arcades everywhere, here comes Maximum Force. It's you against elusive terrorists and you control the body count. You'll board helicopters, ATVs, underwater vehicles and shoot literally everything in sight. Gun down slimeballs on three completely different missions. Blast your way into more than 35 secret rooms (three times as many as Area 51) and blow everything away with extreme prejudice. With Maximum Force, there's no such thing as too much firepower.

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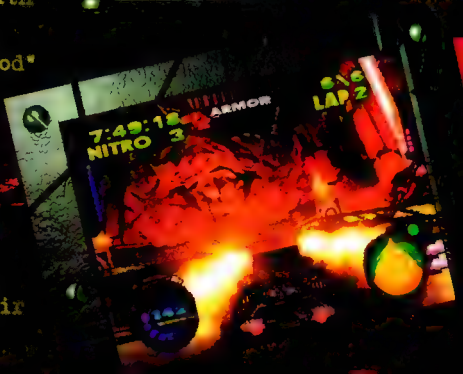
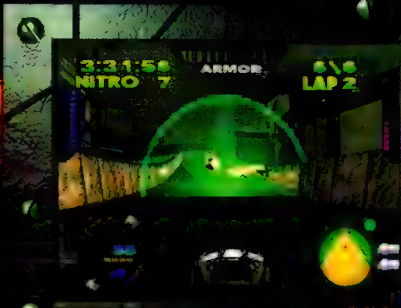
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RAID TO ADULTS



ASPHALT

RACING WITH A VENGEANCE

Interplay



SPAWN

Pros

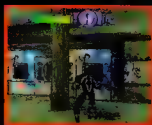
- Hellspawn powers
- Cape, chains and guns

Cons

- His damn inner struggle
- He might be broke from his bad, big-budget movie

Comic book-star-turned-video game/movie/toy/cable-licensing sensation Spawn is coming to the PlayStation in a full 3-D fighting/action game, courtesy of Todd McFarlane and SCEA. Spawn, the being created in hell, has been a popular comic book character for a few years now. We're including him in this Halloween story because any hellspawn is certainly welcome in a creature feature. And who are we to deny Spawn an appearance here?

If anyone is going to have an identity crisis, it's going to be Spawn. Not only was he a good and honest man in his previous life, but he'll take on several different forms for the video game. For each of the different themed worlds of the game, Spawn will have a new outfit: Medieval Spawn for a medieval stage, Savage Spawn for a savage stage and classic Spawn for everything else (including his trip to hell). It's not clear at this stage as to what the different outfits will do for Spawn (but at any rate, it wouldn't affect this fictional battle with Alucard).



VS.



CASTLEVANIA'S ALUCARD

Pros

- Alucard has a million attack options
- Companions and transformations

Cons

- Nothing. Alucard is a powerhouse...
- But what if papa Dracula came in town for a visit?

Why Spawn vs. Alucard? Well, they are both undead, and they were both born of evil (plus it's our feature, and we can do whatever we want). This battle is pretty lopsided. It's a simple fact that Alucard can grow so powerful, that he'll kick anyone's butt in this feature, and Spawn is no exception.

Spawn may have automated tools like his cape and chains, but they wouldn't be a match for any of Alucard's companions, like the protective fairy, demon or sword.

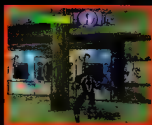
Alucard has the most number of tricks up his gothic sleeve as well. Spells, magical artifacts, special weapons, etc., all make Alucard one tough vampire. And if worse comes to worse, he could always transform into a gaseous cloud and just float away to safety. A frustrated Spawn would be left standing there, twiddling his thumbs.

We're also thinking that a few of Alucard's attacks that utilize a Holy Cross might affect Spawn in an unknown, but probably adverse, way. We've yet to meet a Holy Cross-friendly hellspawn. Maybe this was an unfair fight for us to set up in the first place, but hey, it's just for fun, right?

Spell Dracula backward, and what do you get? The name of Castlevania: Symphony of the Night's star character. Konami's

PlayStation update to the long-running Castlevania series was previewed back in issue #95. This highly anticipated game is already an office favorite as a Japanese import.

Any son of Dracula is an automatic shoe-in to be included in a creature feature. And Alucard is a formidable foe indeed. His slashing sword attack is enough to take care of most opponents, and that's just his *starting* weapon. In his Symphony of the Night adventures, he will pick up a myriad of different weapons and power-ups and magical spells. Alucard also gets the help of a few assistants, some help him offensively, some defensively (he even has a fairy that can resurrect him). He can also transform into a fire-breathing bat, an invincible gaseous cloud or a vicious wolf-dog. With everything available to him, Alucard may just be the most powerful being on the PlayStation, much less this insignificant little feature.





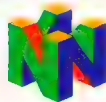
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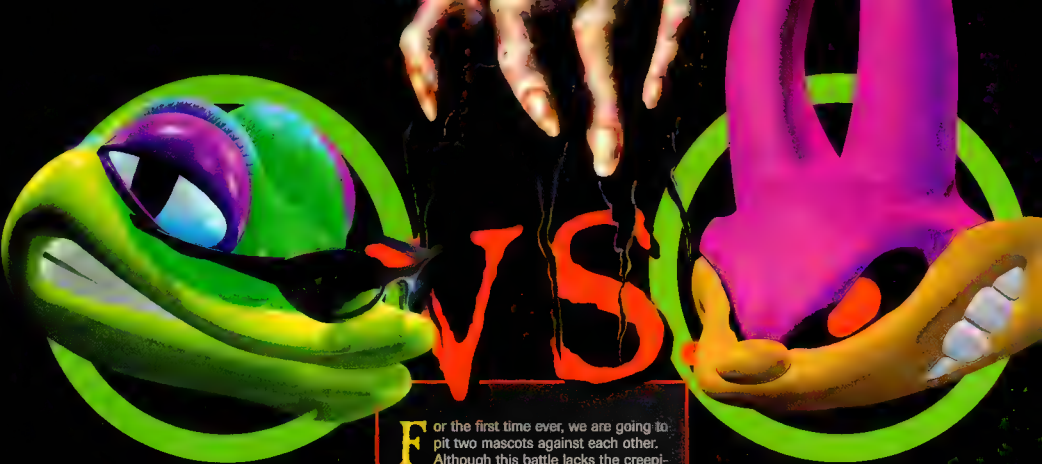
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NINTENDO⁶⁴





GEX

Pros

- Gex is a pro trash talker
- He can stick to walls and ceilings

Cons

- Trash talking may interfere with his performance
- He's a cocky SOB

You might be wondering why we included Gex of all people, er, creatures. If you remember our coverage of Crystal Dynamics' Gex: Enter the Gecko back in issue #98, the 3-D parody-packed sequel for the PlayStation has one stage that's all horror—perfect for our Halloween feature. This world makes fun of everything having to do with horror in contemporary media.

Do you remember Chucky, the psycho killer doll from the *Child's Play* movies? Well, it might be strictly coincidence, but Enter the Gecko has an enemy in the horror level called "Hucky." Guess what? He's an animated doll with a big sharp knife. Other coincidences include hockey masks (just like what Jason used to wear), gloves with knives on the finger tips (strange... Freddy had those too) and skulls with pins stuck in them (looking a lot like Pinhead from *Hellraiser*). You'll find plenty of other creepy material in this game, like zombies, ghosts and morphing walls.

Does Gex have what it takes to stand toe to toe with Jersey Devil?

For the first time ever, we are going to pit two mascots against each other. Although this battle lacks the creepiness or gore factor of the other ones, we'd thought it'd be a fun one to do anyway (Remember: our feature, our prerogative). Who would win if Jersey Devil and Gex decided to go head to head (or rather, tail to tail)? Being that Jersey Devil is a quiet guy who keeps to himself (his attitude all comes from actions, not words), we think the psychological factor would go in Gex's favor. The trash-talking, wise-crackin' gecko will endlessly taunt the Jersey Devil. At first, JD will brush it off, but if we can get annoyed with Gex's voice-overs (remember his first game?), then so can Jersey Devil.

The mechanics also favor Gex. Although Jersey Devil has wings, they are just for gliding, not flying. Gex on the other hand has the ability to climb on any surface at any angle. For this sole factor, we must give the fight to Gex. Anytime he needs to, he can climb up and hang out on a tall ceiling, way out of reach of JD; the poor devil can't attack what he can't reach!

JERSEY DEVIL

Pros

- Intimidation Factor—Jersey Devil looks mean!
- His spin-tail attack

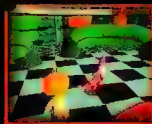
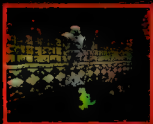
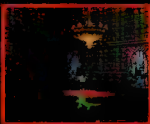
Cons

- He's a rookie in the video game business
- He can't fly or climb

OK, we realize that Jersey Devil isn't a scary game by any means, but JD himself certainly belongs in a creature feature. This mysterious masked crusader looks half bat, half-demon. Plus, he has spunk and attitude. So we decided Jersey Devil has the right qualifications to be included in a Halloween creature feature.

If you read our Jersey Devil preview in issue #97, you would know that he's based on a "real-life" mythical creature (real-life meaning outside of the video game realm). Jersey Devil sightings date back to the early 1800s. The reports all talk about a hideous creature who'd haunt several locations along the East Coast.

Today, Megatoon and Malofilm (the developer and publisher respectively) have turned the image that has frightened hundreds into something a little more tolerable and even a little cute, for the PlayStation. But he's certainly no slouch when it comes to a little fistcuffs between PlayStation mascots.



ADVANTAGE: GEX

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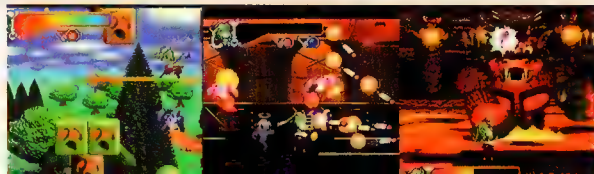
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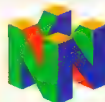


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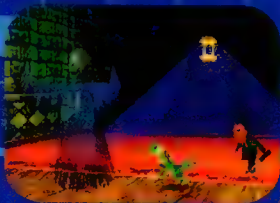
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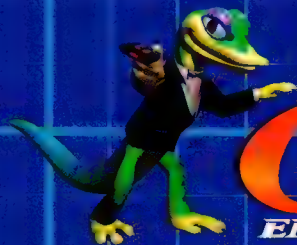
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An explosively new, free-roaming 3D action game. We're pushing the limits of 3D technology with 360 degrees of "go, anywhere you want" exploration. Brilliantly detailed graphics and lightning fast Gecko action.

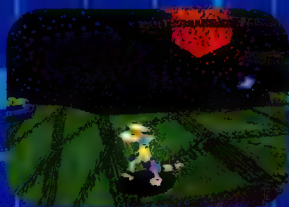
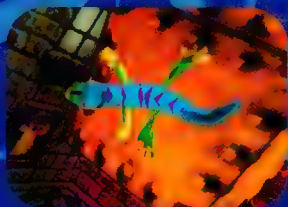


Rebuilt for secret agent action. Gravity-defying wall crawling. Whip-cracking tail-attacks. And multiple disguises. All in a sarcastic media-dimension parody. Teika that James Bond, Fredrico Cruger and Mr. Lee (legal weapons) require us to be vague.



GEX

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DOOM DEMONS

Pros

- Pain Elementals can release countless Lost Souls
- Powerful demon weaponry

Cons

- Predictable behavior
- Wimpy low-end fighters (imps, sergeants, soldiers)

The one that started it all is getting a bit old. But a Halloween feature without some mention of Doom is pointless.

Doom is, as if you didn't know, a first-person perspective shooter. It's not really scary, but it has its moments. The enemies all come from hell, making them perfect material for a creature feature.

Nightmare demons, lost souls, cyber-demons, barons of hell and pain elementals—you can't find a better representation of what hell has to offer. They shoot, bite and blast. They use hellfire, plasma cannons and rocket launchers. They are a bunch of bad-asses.

A war between the demons of Doom and the minions of Doom would be of gargantuan proportions. This is the biggest fight of this feature and perhaps the most interesting. How well would id Software's famous creations fare against each other?

VS.

Now for the final, most monumental fight of the night. What would happen if hell's demons tried to take over the world of Quake instead of Earth? (Or if you prefer, what if the Quake guys tried to take over the Doom hell? Doesn't really matter—the two story lines are practically identical.)

Quakers would get an early advantage. Their small-fry characters (grunts, rottwailers, enforcers and knights) are more maneuverable than Doom's imps and zombie soldiers. The Quake fiends will rush and crush the predictable stand-still-and-shoot Doomers.

In the long run, however, the higher-ups of hell's hierarchy will eventually score the most kills. You just can't beat demons that have rocket launchers and plasma guns for body parts. The closest Quake equivalent is the chainsaw-hackin', grenade-tossin' Ogre—he's no slouch, but he doesn't match up to Doom's greater demons.

Regardless, the Doomers have perhaps the greatest advantage of any being in this feature—thanks to the 2-D nature of their sprite-based bods. After all, when things get dicey they can just turn sideways and become practically invisible to the eyes of their three-dimensional, polygonal foes. Being a sprite does have its advantages.



QUAKE MONSTERS

Pros

- Speed and aggressiveness
- Newer technology (hey, Doom can run on a 386)

Cons

- A few too many Quake warriors depend on hand-to-hand combat

Quake will soon be available on all next-generation systems. This blockbuster PC hit will be coming to the Nintendo 64 (Williams), PlayStation (GT Interactive) and Saturn (Sega).

Quake, as most of you already know, is id Software's follow-up to their Doom series. It is the first "Doom" game to have polygonal enemies (Turok is the first console game to feature polygonal opponents, but Quake for the PC came out first). The environments are less colorful and more dreary than those in Doom. The story line is basically the same: Evil creatures from another dimension are coming to Earth to kill its inhabitants. Your job is to stop these twisted and demented death squads.

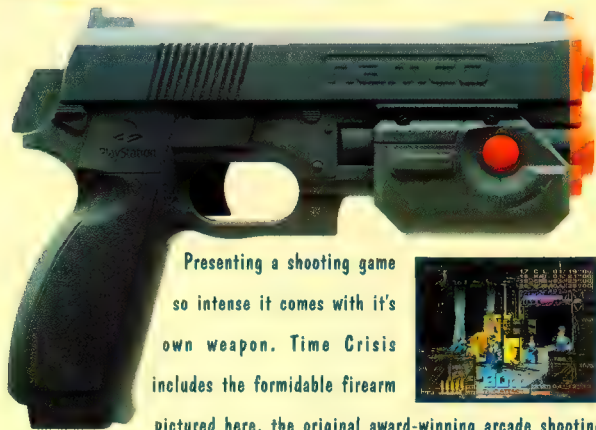
Quake enemies are slightly more menacing than Doom's. They are generally faster and all-around more aggressive. Some of them will even run at you, a simple action not seen in Doom.

Most of them carry powerful weapons, but their looks are enough to kill.

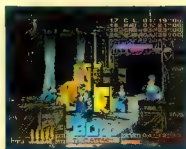


ADVANTAGE: THE DEMONS OF DOOM

TIME CRISIS



Presenting a shooting game so intense it comes with it's own weapon. Time Crisis includes the formidable firearm



pictured here, the original award-winning arcade shooting

game, plus a whole new shoot-

fest specifically created for the

PlayStation™ console. Full 3D

polygon environments surround you

with full 3D polygon enemies.

Multiple modes include Story,

Arcade and Time Attack, plus

multiple endings. Blast away and

duck for cover as you exterminate the

criminal element in a variety of hidden

zones. It's fast. It's frenzied. It's shoot first

and do the chalk outline later.



ARCade FOR THE PS2 WITH
AN ADDED TIME ATTACK
THE BUNCH IDEA

**THE MOST
ACCURATE
GUN ON THE
PLAYSTATION
CONSOLE!!!!!!!**



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With the most accurate gun available for the PlayStation® console, Time Crisis is a can't-miss proposition.

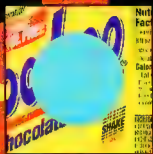


24 Hours in Cyber Space

They say it's

the biggest thing since sliced bread, and @ times just as delicious, but the Internet (the "Net" as the cool kids will say) isn't just big from a popularity standpoint. The great expanse of computers linked to one another is physically big as well. First, the number of PCs around these days is easily in the millions. Add to that the number of Macs and other types of connections there are (Netlink, X-band, etc.) and what you get is a mind-boggling number. Second, a computer in New York can easily be communicating with one in Japan, so the distance thing spans the entire globe. It's no surprise then, that we here @ little of EGM also go on the Net. EGM first appeared "online" with just an e-mail address long ago (now it's

by Shawn Smith (a.k.a. LordChimp)



“...it’s the
biggest thing
since sliced
bread...and just
as delicious...”

egm_mail@zd.com). Then we went on to have a full-fledged Web site. But the site known as NUKE went to worldwide heaven some time ago, and is still mourned by some. Now we have a new Web site (www.videogames.com) which is a recent addition to our family. So, yeah, we’re on the Net @ work, but do we go on @ home? The answer is yes, but have we ever gone on there for 24 hours @ one time, searching for video game (and other) related info? Of course, we say no because what freak would want to go on for 24 hours straight? Only a fool would (a big, bumbling oaf of a fool). I suppose that fool is me. But don’t forget that many of you are online as well. We’ve found that over 50 percent of our readers go online for one reason or another. So the elders @ EGM told me that I needed to stay on for 24 hours in one sitting. They strapped me to a chair and hooked up the Mountain Dew and liquid Dorito I.V.s. What follows is that 24-hour day, in all of its glory (or shame in some cases). Read it like a transcript and note: To hide my true identity, my name while online was “LordChimp” as in Lord of the Chimps.

time: 8:00a.m.

• Enter LordChimp, tired and kind of hungry. He knows this is what he has been training for. A damp smell fills the small cubicle where LordChimp sits. In front of



his computer about to enter into a world filled with unspeakable things, LordChimp hits the "on" switch and shields his eyes. He doesn't know why he's shielding his eyes, but he does it anyway—maybe for effect, maybe to harken back to his "see no evil" days. He goes to check his regular e-mail account (a standard method of communication on the Net) and finds that he has received several messages from readers. There are dozens of different e-mail programs and different methods of receiving e-mail. Check www.filez.com to find a shareware program for yourself (or go to www.juno.com for info on how to get a free Internet e-mail account altogether).

E-mail #1: Dear Shawn Smith. Is this really Shawn Smith from EGM? You are the coolest. I think EGM is the best. I think Dan Hsu and Crispin Boyer are awesome. One day I hope to be like you guys. Sushi-X rocks! Hey, can I have some free games for my PlayStation?

LordChimp: Delete.

E-mail #2: You suck! Can I have a free subscription to EGM?

LordChimp: Hmmm...delete.

• LordChimp becomes bored with his e-mails since they first made him feel good, but then made him feel bad. Now he feels indifferent and knows there are better things to look for online. He decides to try IRC (Internet Relay Chat) where Internet users can "talk" to one another on various subjects ranging from farming to video games and pretty much anything else one could think of...anything. LordChimp enters the IRC channel known as #vidgames! (this is what you would enter in your IRC program). IRC programs are easily found on www.filez.com like "mIRC" on the PC and "IRClie" on the Mac. LordChimp finds one other person on IRC @ this early hour named "DaReaper."

LordChimp: Hey, how's it going?
Know of any good video gaming Web sites?

DaReaper: Oh yeah, there are plenty. What speci-

cally? Why don't you try some of these...
www.nintendo.jp.com,
www.starvision.net/gazunta and
www.n64hq.com.

LordChimp: Cool, thanks. Well, I'll talk to you later.

DaReaper: Wait. I have more sites.

LordChimp: Thanks, but those are a good start.

DaReaper: I can help you. I promise.

LordChimp: Look, I really need to go.

DaReaper: Why doesn't anyone ever want to talk to me? I'm so lonely.

LordChimp: I think you have the wrong IRC channel here, buddy.

• LordChimp quickly closes his IRC program and decides to check out the Web sites DaReaper recommended. LordChimp starts Netscape (an Internet software program used for "surfing the net"—www.netscape.com) and begins. Another good one to use is Microsoft's Internet Explorer—www.microsoft.com. LordChimp continues cruisin' on the Web looking for more good info, but wonders how much is fact and how much is opinion.

long enough to break out his sack lunch of peanut butter and jelly with some chips and a fruit punch drink that really has too much sugar in it. Curious about how healthy his present meal is, LordChimp checks out www.msue.msue.edu/msue/cyf/food/

time: 1:00p.m.

• With lunch behind him, LordChimp starts poking around the Internet looking for hot spots. He finds out that for some real action, he should check out the IRC video game channels sometime after 5:00 p.m. (and last all the way past midnight). With some time to kill, LordChimp decides to check out some more Web sites since he has been told that daytime is usually a good time for that since not much else is going on around the Net. He goes to www.playstation.com for some PlayStation stuff and www.sega.com for some info on the Saturn. Then LordChimp goes with a sure thing and checks out VideogameSpot @ www.videogamespot.com

time: 5:00p.m.

• LordChimp jumps over to his IRC program to see what's going on over there. He finds that there's not only just one video game channel on IRC but many. Some include: #vidgames!, #vgames, #n64, #trgv (classic video games), #sf2 and many, many more. Amazed, LordChimp checks each of them out and finds that this is what chat's all about. On IRC people can debate what makes the PlayStation a better system than the Saturn or Nintendo 64 in an intelligent manner with few interruptions. After all, it's not as busy as he thought.

time: 7:30p.m.

• LordChimp hears a chime notifying him that new e-mail has arrived. Excited, he goes to open it. It turns out to be from his mom. She's wondering if he wants any leftover chicken and dumplings. LordChimp wonders if this technology thing is such a good idea after all.

time: 10:30p.m.

• LordChimp decides to check out the America Online video game chat room (search for "games") one last time before he

time: 12:15p.m.

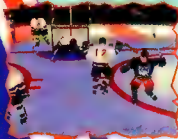
• Hungry, LordChimp composes himself just

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WHAT OVER 600 NHL® PLAYERS FEAR MOST.

HIMSELF.

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GRETZKY'S 98
3D HOCKEY
AS FAST AS IT GETS WITHOUT LEAVING IT.

He holds more career records than any player in NHL history. And we took his speed, moves and cunning and put them right into Gretzky's '98 3D Hockey. It's not just a game. It's an NHL war zone, with active trading, player stat cards and a new, advanced simulation mode that even the real Gretzky could have a hard time beating. Wanna piece of it? Get in line. It's hittin' the ice in November.



MIDWAY



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goes back onto IRC. America Online is an online service separate from the Internet, but one that also allows its users to have access to the Web, FTP (File Transfer Protocol, a way of transferring files on the Net) and the Newsgroups (like a virtual bulletin board where people post messages on various subjects, like a delayed chat in a way). AOL's chat is different than IRC but has some of the same characteristics. LordChimp goes on...

LordChimp: Hey all.

Ottomatix: Yo! I'm gonna punt you dude.

LordChimp: Huh? What do you mean? You sound pretty urban. You from a big city, tough guy?

- LordChimp comes to find that to be "punted" means to have a continuous flow of Instant Messages come to you from one person until you get "punted" offline because of all those messages. It's not a good thing but luckily it didn't work (but Ottomatix kept trying). Punting is not condoned by AOL in any way, shape or form. Meanwhile, back in the chat room...

Cesa223: Nintendo 64 rocks!

Magtronix4: No way, PlayStation kills it, dude.

Cesa223: Get outta here, yo. n64 kills the PS. *Wilbur_PC:* I like my Saturn actually.

- A series of messages telling Wilbur_PC that he is lame suddenly appear. Soon, many of the chat room occupants seem to be punting poor Wilbur_PC off AOL for no good reason we can see.

LordChimp: Don't you guys think you were a little harsh?

Cesa223: No way. Why? You wanna be next?

LordChimp: So do you guys actually have any good conversation about gaming on here?

Cesa223: Yeah, man. I like N64. It rocks!

LordChimp: No, I mean more than that... ahhh, never mind.

- Disgusted with the lame chatter on AOL, LordChimp continues looking for something intelligent on the Internet. Through his investigating, he has found that IRC is the place to be on the Net—a place of good discussion and few Flame Wars (Flame Wars are where two users keep insulting each other back and forth, over and over again).

time: 2:00a.m.

- Sadly, LordChimp realizes that he is almost

out of Doritos (www.fritolay.com), but realizes that he may have some two-week-old Tostitos (same address) in the kitchen. What will he do?

time: 2:30a.m.

- Doritos in hand, LordChimp comes back from the local 7-11 (www.7-11.com) ready for some more in-depth discussion on video games. More IRC debates follow on #sega, #psx, #m64, and #atari. LordChimp has great debates on the future of the Saturn, but finds that Jaguar owners are a bitter bunch. Here's a sampling of a discussion on #vidgames! Notice how it goes from one subject to the next rather quickly:

SuperPac: hey Chimp

_Chimp: what's up pac

SuperPac: how 'bout that N64 eh? Now that's a system that SUCKS.

_Chimp: you think so? why?

SuperPac: cartridge man...that format is archaic.

SuperPac: hey Alert

Alert: Hey Chimp

Mo: hmn

Alert: Any of you guys play Time Crisis?

pico10: Alert: me

_Chimp: the n64 still has some awesome graphics though

Alert: Picc—How long a game is it. I just got it for the playstation

SuperPac: Chimp: yeah, but they don't have that interactive FMV that we all love.

_Chimp: FMV is overrated...look at night trap...now that was a classic...ahem.

SuperPac: Night Trap is a classic...fantastic game.

Alert: Chimp—FMV rules, you know that.

_Chimp: maybe if FMV in games was like Soviet Strike, then we'd be somewhere.

SuperPac: Chimp: Soviet Strike? That game sucks...you suck.

_Chimp: I'm talking about the FMV, not the game, wussie.

Alert: Skye—you suck.

SuperPac: EA should never have made Soviet Strike...what were they thinking?

_Chimp: they were trying to bring back the series but failed...like the PS will.

Alert: Soviet Strike had some technical flaws, but it was average.

Alert: Nuclear Strike is much better.

_Chimp: nuclear strike is soviet strike w/o the russians.

TGh0st: But anyway...the N64 sucks...PS makes a good cupholder...I still like my AMIGA.

_Chimp: Amiga rocks.

TGh0st: and ummm...James Pond...

time: 5:00a.m.

- LordChimp goes back onto IRC feeling a little better (or so he says). Going back onto #vidgames! LordChimp starts actively participating in discussion.

LordChimp: Hey guys! I'm back.

Alert: How you feelin' Chimp?

Killah: Hey what's up?

LordChimp: I'm feeling better. Say, Killah,

are you new to this channel?

Killah: Yeah, why?

LordChimp: You like apes?

Killah: Sure I guess.

Alert: I think he's doing it again.

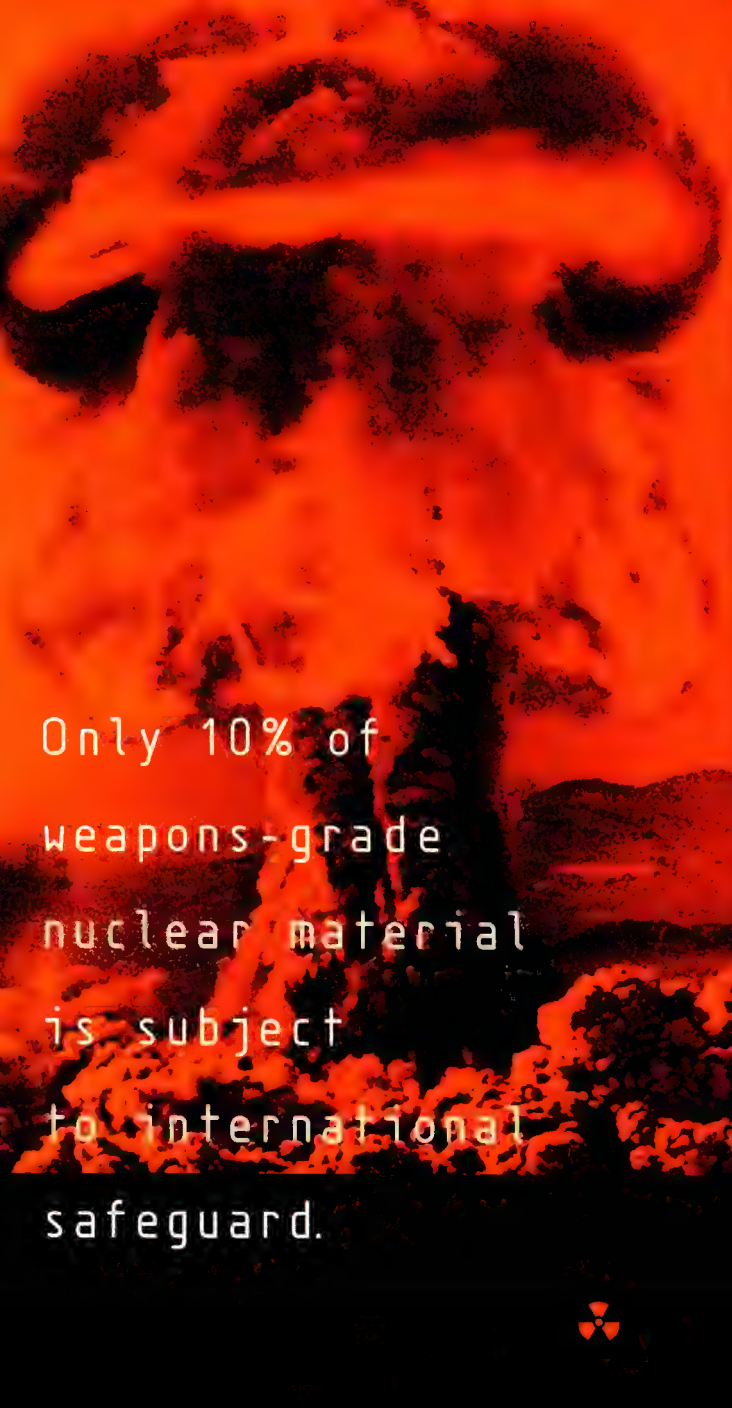
LordChimp: I have a chimp I can sell you for \$100...we'll do it real fancy like.

Killah: I don't know what you mean.

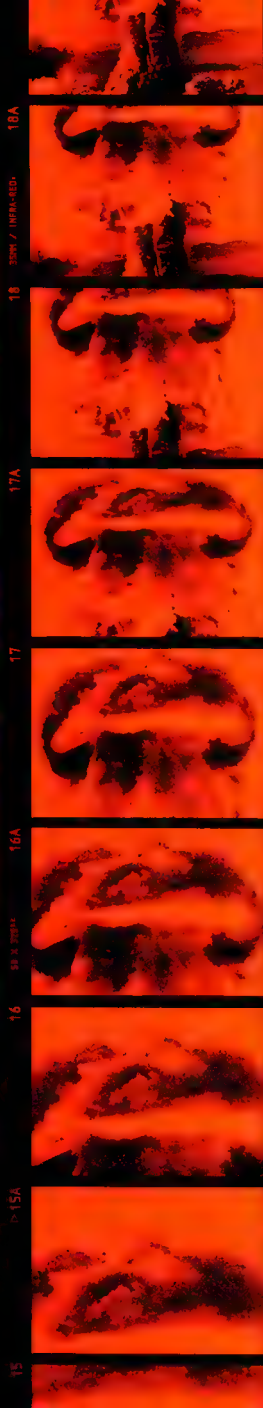
SuperPac: Chimp: Maybe you should go get some rest.


Red_Alert: Don't come back here OK?

The verdict: If you really want to find some useful information on the Internet, stay on the Web most of the time, and go onto a video game IRC channel @ night (IRC's peak time). Stay away from AOL unless they have something cool going on (like some live event) because the average user seems to have some serious social problems and far too much computer knowledge. NOTE: Although LordChimp was supposed to last until 8:00a.m., we found him @ 7:15a.m. curled up like a lamb, dreaming of streaming data. ■

A large, detailed image of a nuclear mushroom cloud dominates the left side of the page. The cloud is dark and billowing, with a bright, glowing base where the explosion occurred. The overall color palette is monochromatic, using shades of red and black.

Only 10% of
weapons-grade
nuclear material
is subject
to international
safeguard.





The
remaining
90% is subject
to more
extreme security
measures.



NUCLEAR STRIKE
THE SEQUEL TO SOVIET STRIKE
ELECTRONIC ARTS



blood
& sweat
fear

MORTAL 4 KOMBAT

IT'S THE
MOST 3-D
2-D GAME
IN FIGHTING
HISTORY!

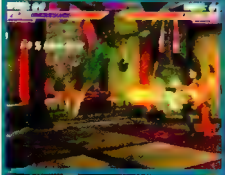
Mortal Kombat 4 is finally here! Since the first MK hit in 1992, it has been one of the most popular arcade series since, well, Street Fighter. Each incarnation has had just enough new additions to keep fans poppin' in their hard-earned quarters. MK was revolutionary in its gameplay (heck—it added the word “fatality” to every game player’s vocabulary!). MK2 was just da bomb with several new characters, new fatalities and the most kick-ass graphics of any fighting game to date. MK3 had the Run button, originally scoffed at by some people as “no big deal” but now used as often as fireballs and uppercuts.

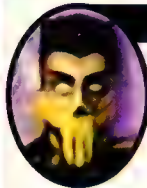
So what does the newest MK deliver? Its graphics are far superior to that of, say, Street Fighter EX. The idea, however, is extremely similar: a 3-D rendering of a 2-D fighting engine. Just as with SFEX, MK4 is lacking in 3-D gameplay. There is no sidestep, for instance. Ed Boon said he chose not to put it in because no one uses it in games like Tekken. But MK4 is also missing reversals and multistep throws that could have added much to its gameplay.

So as it stands, the game plays quite a bit like the series’ previous installments—quite an achievement considering its 3-D graphics. It does have absolutely the best collision detection of any 3-D game (for example, you can uppercut or roundhouse someone out of the air just as you did in MK2 and MK3, but really can’t do in SFEX, Tekken or the VF games).

Another major change is that now every character has a different weapon (the finished version’s weapons may be different from those in the test game. Once the game is tested for balance, the weakest character will get the strongest weapon and so on).

The finished version will also have scripted cinema endings, as well as one more selectable character and three secret characters.





SCORPION

Scorpion is the same fun-lovin' ninja he's always been. He still has his teleport, air throw, and of course, his "GET OVER HERE!" spear. The bad part is that his previous "real" combos, such as his teleport punch spear, don't work because of the animation times of his moves. His current weapon is a basic long sword.



SUB-ZERO

Sub-Zero is pretty standard as well. He has his slide, freeze clone, and of course, his freeze fireball. His combos such as jump kick slide and freeze, upcut then freeze in air for another hit, remain intact in MK4. His current weapon is a hatchet that can take off medium damage.



SONYA

Sonya has the same old moves with the addition of a really cool weapon. Her (if she keeps it, that is) "spiked pinwheel" is a group of several spinning daggers on the end of a stick and can do the most damage next to Liu Kang's snake sword. Her diagonal kick seems to be more vertically arched as well.



LIU KANG

Liu Kang's moves are all the same but he is now a full-on F, F character with no more charge moves. His bicycle kick is now F, F LK making him even more deadly than he was in the previous MKs (and that's a bold statement!). His current weapon is a curved snake-like sword. It is fast and takes off the most damage.



RAIDEN

Raiden is a little different. He now has a high and low fireball and his "backward lightning" no longer exists. The animation of his Torpedo is excellent. He doesn't seem to have his teleport anymore either. His current weapon does not do the kind of damage you'd expect from a 3-foot-long mallet.



FUJIN

Fujin has the most amount of moves of any new character. He has a jumping knee attack, a couple of spin moves as well as a fireball. He also has Ermac's levitate move. His weapon is the most interesting: a crossbow that shoots out a green bolt of energy that bounces off walls.

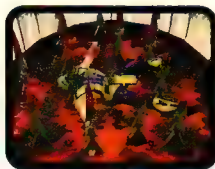
THE GAMEPLAY

MOVIE GROUP MODE

The basic moves are all the same: D + HP for uppercut, etc. Pulling out your weapon is the same as Scorpion's teleport, QCB + HP, except for Scorpion's which was a HCF + HP. This will change by the time the full version is out. There is also a new hyper extend or bone-breaker throw by hitting F + LK. There's a new F + LP throw for everyone. There are three buttons at the bottom of the Character Select Screen as well. One of them will be for Group Mode. One is to hide what character you choose.



THE MAKING OF MORTAL KOMBAT 4



MK4 has been in the works for some time now. First off, Boon and the rest of the team decided on a 3-D style, which would require substantially more powerful hardware.

That hardware is Zeus, a monster system allowing for as many as 1.2 million quads per second, a quad being several polygons pieced together so small you can hardly tell they're polygons! Next they used several people (including Midway employees like Boon and former MKer Richard "Kano" Divisio) performing karate moves to get the animation for the characters in the game. Then they used a program called Lightwave to create the models for the characters based on Tobias' moves and sketches.



FLY THE UNFRIENDLY SKIES.

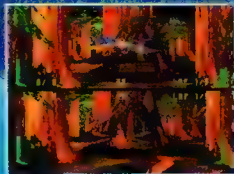
Leptus is dying. The tournament is on. And everyone wants a chance to succeed the great Emperor of Entymion. Twenty-two bug-back warriors will enter a true-3D race to the death on their freakish mounts around 6 otherworldly tracks. And



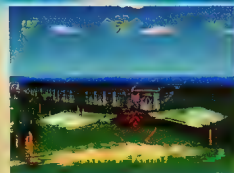
you will be one of them. Stunning weapons. Multiple attacks. 6 degrees of movement. Deathmatches. Time trials. And, of course, the ultimate Tournament. Enter the hi-resolution hive of insane insect racing! Bugriders: The Race of Kings...it's the real sting!



Lock-on with guided missiles and lightning-assaults.



Back to the game in split-screen.



Control speed by cropping and reining.

BUGRIDERS™ THE RACE OF KINGS™



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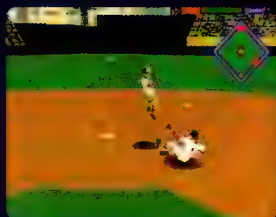


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I

**F HEAVEN IS ANYTHING LIKE
WRIGLEY FIELD ON A SATURDAY AFTERNOON,
THEN DEATH WOULDN'T BE SUCH A BAD THING.**



**MLB
98**

**PROPERTY OF PLAYSTATION
ATHLETIC DEPT.**

On the MK4 test tour, gamers are getting their first taste of the new MK. But still to be added (besides the missing characters, character balance and other gameplay items) are the fatalities and endings. These will be quite different from what you're currently used to. The fatalities will be graphically enhanced. A few of them, such as Scorpion's fire-breathing finisher and Sub-Zero's spine rip, will look familiar, while an arm rip and others will be completely new. Boon has stated the perspective during fatalities will be much more dynamic. The endings will also cease to be two or three pictures with text underneath. The team is currently working on scripted cinema sequences! There is still quite a bit of work to be done to MK4!



MK Mythologies is the Sub-Zero side-scrolling adventure coming soon to a PS and N64 near you. The game is extremely similar to the gameplay in an MK game, but in a side-scrolling environment.

Besides having excellent backgrounds



and a cool story line, a few of the characters you see in MK4 will make appearances in this game as well!



SHINNOK

Shinnok only had one move playable in the newest version and unfortunately as of press time we don't even know what that one move is. He is an evil character in Japanese mythology and looks extremely sinister in his red robe and strange hat. His weapon is a long staff with a blade on the end of it.



QUAN CHI

Quan Chi is the only character in MK4 making appearances in both MK Mythologies and *MK: Annihilation* (the MK movie sequel). He seems to be a monk of some kind. He has a couple combos as of press time, as well as a move where he automatically steals another opponent's weapon from his or her hands!



NOOB SAIBOT

Noob will probably have the same moves he did in the previous MK, but right now he doesn't have much of anything new. He has his teleport, but that's as fancy as he gets right now. Once he teleports through the floor, it's up to you to provide the attack. He has no weapon as of yet either.

REPTILE

One of two new characters in the most recent MK4 tour version was a much more reptilian Reptile. He has scales and a strange new mask. His only move right now is a bizarre one where he crawls on the ground after you. It is unknown if he will have his ball, spit or slide attacks.



KAI

Kai is the "African-American Liu Kang" character we reported in last month's *EGM*. He is extremely fast and has several attacks, such as a fireball that shoots vertically (like the new Sub-Zero's freeze attack) and a move where he stands on his hands and chases after you. He had no weapon as of press time.



??????????

Who's still to come? Well you won't see Shang Tsung (*THE BEST CHARACTER*), Kintaro, Shao Kahn or several characters from MK3 (*NO JAX!*). There is a chance Goro will be in it, as there are three characters still shrouded in mystery. One character will also be added to the selectable roster.

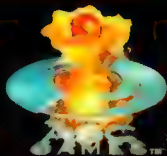
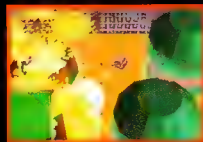
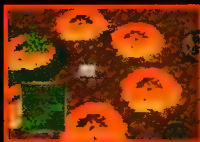


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N64



Duke Nukem's Stadium Boss goes polygonal for the N64 version.

You can DukeMatch with up to three human or CPU opponents.

Duke NUKEM 64

The Doom Clone With An Attitude

One of the most popular first-person shooters for the PC is slowly making its way to the home systems. The latest version, for the N64, is perhaps the best so far. Duke Nukem 64 goes beyond a simple straight-to-console port. The designers are adding enough new features and changing enough old ones to make gamers want to take a closer look.

For those of you who are not familiar with the Duke, here's an abbreviated history: Aliens invade Earth, Duke kills aliens. OK, no big deal there, but Duke's winning formula on the PC wasn't a result of the story line. Duke Nukem 3D became a big hit because of the wonderfully designed stages, unique weaponry and killer personality.

Duke Nukem is the first major first-person shooter to take place in present day and futuristic environments. You must explore many earthly locales like movie theaters,

book stores, hotels, subway stations, office buildings, pool halls and much more. In the second episode, Duke visits space stations, alien bases and other sci-fi levels. Each level is crafted with special attention paid to every detail, from the graffiti on the walls to the pay phones in the night clubs.

The weapons also make for an interesting game playing experience. In the Nintendo 64 version, you can wield shotguns with high-explosive rounds, twin submachine guns, grenade launchers, heat-seeking missiles, shrink rays, plasma cannons, laser trip mines and pipe bombs (unfortunately, the freeze ray from the original game has been taken out). So not only can you blast an enemy apart, you can set traps and shrink them (then squish 'em).

Duke 64 will support two to four multiplayer action. What if you don't have three other friends to play Duke with? Well don't fret, because Duke 64 has a new

feature called the AI Bot, ported from Duke Nukem: Atomic Edition on the PC. You can simulate multiplayer DukeMatches with computer-controlled opponents.

Duke 64 also has 32 large levels that will feed any Duke fan's appetite for destruction. Three of these are N64 exclusive Duke-Match levels, and the other 29 are modified levels taken from the PC's Duke Nukem: Atomic Edition. Each of these has been redesigned from the ground up. The secrets have been moved around, and the level layouts have been changed. Upon first playing Duke 64, you may see much resemblance to the previous versions, but you'll realize that things have been changed significantly.

GT Interactive is certainly making an effort to make this Duke stand out over the others. The changes may give this version just what it needs to beat out the multitude of other "Doom clones" on the market. Besides, what other console version is going to let you play a four-player match of one of the best first-person shooters around? ■



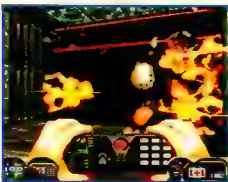
Gamer's EDGE

So what about the babes?

Everyone is wondering whether the console Duke Nukems will have any of the adult-themed humor found in the original. Well, the Nintendo 64 Duke is, so far, the tamest. All of the formerly scantily clad women will now be wearing T-shirts, and you can no longer kill them. To make matters worse, you can actually rescue them! The game will award you points for every female you escort off to safety. Oh well. What did you expect from the "Fun Machine?"



Use security cameras to scope out unexplored parts of the stage.



Laser trip mines—you just can't have a blast without them.

PUBLISHER	GT Interactive
DEVELOPER	Eurocom
THEME	First-person shooter
PLAYERS	1-4
% COMPLETE	50%
RELEASE DATE	December
ALSO ON	None

PREPARE TO ENTER

Contest Rules:

1. No Purchase Necessary: To enter, send a standard size postcard containing name, address, and phone number to "EGM Deathtrap Dungeon Contest," EIDOS Interactive, 651 Brannan Street, San Francisco, CA, 94107. No purchase or payment of any money is necessary to enter. One entry per household. All entries must be handwritten. Mechanically reproduced entries will not be accepted. Entries must be received by October 31, 1997. All entries become exclusive property of EIDOS Interactive (Sponsor) and will not be acknowledged or returned. Sponsor assumes no responsibility for lost, mutilated, late, illegible, incomplete, postage-due or misdirected entries. Only one prize per family, organization or household.

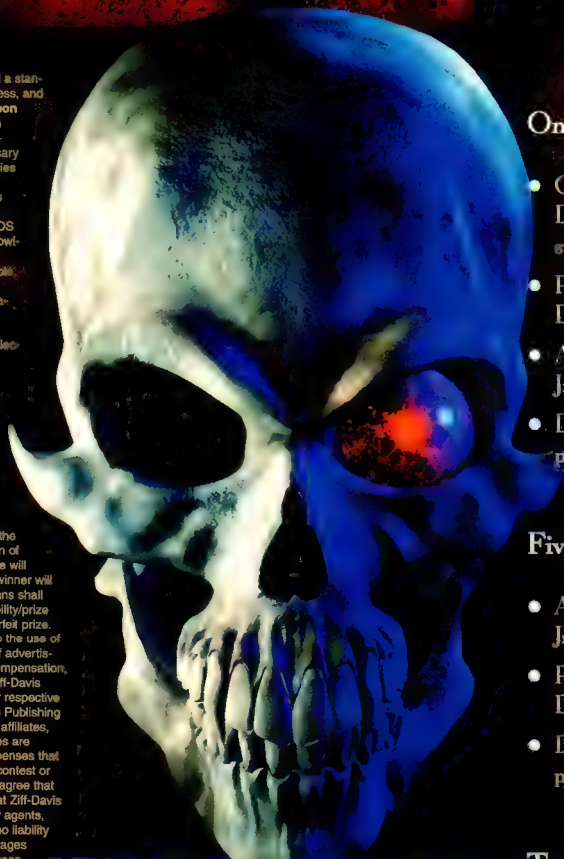
2. Prizes: One Grand Prize winner will receive the official Deathtrap Dungeon collector's sword, a PSX version of Deathtrap Dungeon, an ACT LABS Psychopad Jr. gamepad, and a Deathtrap Dungeon poster. Five First Prize winners will receive an ACT LABS Psychopad Jr. gamepad, a PSX version of Deathtrap Dungeon, and a Deathtrap Dungeon poster. Ten Second Prize winners will receive a Deathtrap Dungeon Strategy guide and a Deathtrap Dungeon poster.

4. Eligibility: Contest open to residents of United States and Canada. Void in Rhode Island and Quebec. Non-compliance with the time parameters contained herein or return of any prize/prize notification as undeliverable will result in disqualification and an alternate winner will be selected. Winners or their legal guardians shall sign an affidavit of eligibility/release of liability/prize acceptance within 30 days of receipt or forfeit prize. By acceptance of prize, winner(s) agree to the use of their name and/or likeness for purposes of advertising, trade, or promotion, without further compensation, unless prohibited by law. Employees of Ziff-Davis Publishing Company, Sponsor(s) and their respective affiliates are not eligible. Neither Ziff-Davis Publishing Company, Sponsor(s) nor their respective affiliates, subsidiaries, divisions or related companies are responsible for any damages, taxes or expenses that consumers might incur as a result of this contest or receipt of prize. Winners accepting prizes agree that all prizes are awarded on the condition that Ziff-Davis Publishing Company, Sponsor(s) and their agents, representatives and employees will have no liability whatsoever for any injuries, losses or damages of any kind resulting from acceptance, possession or use of the prizes.

5. Winners List: For a list of winners, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to "EGM Deathtrap Dungeon Contest Winners List," EIDOS Interactive, 651 Brannan Street, San Francisco, CA, 94107. Requests for winners lists must be received by November 7, 1997. Allow 4 weeks for delivery of winners list.

6. Restrictions: Void where prohibited or restricted by law. All federal, state and local regulations apply.

7. Sponsors: This contest is solely sponsored by EIDOS Interactive and ACT LABS. EIDOS Interactive and Deathtrap Dungeon are trademarks of EIDOS, Inc. © 1997 EIDOS Inc. Psychopad Jr. and ACT LABS are trademarks of ACT Laboratory Ltd. © 1997 ACT Laboratory Ltd. All Rights Reserved. Printed in USA.



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One Grand Prize

- Official Deathtrap Dungeon collector's sword
- PSX version of Deathtrap Dungeon
- ACT LABS Psychopad Jr. gamepad
- Deathtrap Dungeon poster

Five First Prize

- ACT LABS Psychopad Jr. gamepad
- PSX version of Deathtrap Dungeon
- Deathtrap Dungeon poster

Ten Second Prize

- Deathtrap Dungeon Strategy guide
- Deathtrap Dungeon poster

ACT LABS

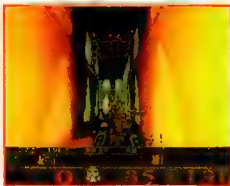
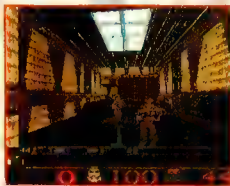


EIDOS

INTERACTIVE

You've been warned.

SATURN



Shooting creatures when you're this close to them is not recommended. Kinda neat, but not recommended.

QUAKE

Saturn Owners, Get Ready To Rumble

Q

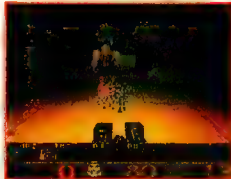
quake revolutionized PC gaming with its incredible 3-D graphic engine and Internet capabilities when it arrived a little over a year ago. Finally, this groundbreaking 3-D game is making its 32-Bit debut on the Saturn, a system whose polygonal capabilities have been generally understated.

Quake is about as straightforward a game as they come. It is a first-person, 3-D shooter that has no fancy story, no full-motion video and enemies that have the personality of a tablecloth (although they really are good at killing). In fact, the only goal in Quake is to kill everything in your path to reach the level's exit teleporter called a "Slipgate."

Within each level are plenty of



enemies to sate your killing instincts. There are 13 different ones in all including vicious rottweilers, laser gun-wielding soldiers, lightning-spewing Shamblers, zombies that rip out and throw their own poison flesh as a weapon (Crispin's line is "Give them credit for making do with what they have") and big, fat ogres that throw grenades with one hand and hold a chainsaw in



the other. There are also a couple of huge end Bosses that can be found at the end of the first and fourth "Episodes" (groupings of approximately six levels each). The arsenal in Quake is comprised of eight different weapons tailored to achieve the same result in many different ways. For close-

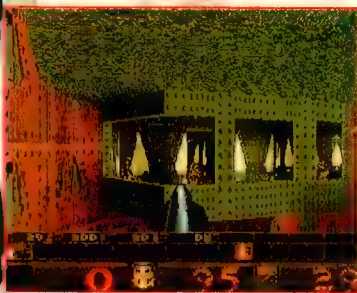
range encounters, the weapon of choice is an axe or a shotgun. When there's some space between you and your target, the Rocket Launcher does wonders. The Grenade Launcher is handy for rolling little explosive bundles of joy down stairwells and through windows. Also in the repertoire are a Nail Gun, a Perforator (a bigger Nail Gun) and the Thunderbolt, a gun that discharges lightning bursts. Several defensive items can be found throughout the levels such as different grades of armor, an item that makes you invisible (only a pair of 3-D eyeballs are visible to others) and runes that enhance your soldier's abilities.

There's a bit more to the game than just mindlessly shooting enemies (although, yes, that's most of it). In addition to avoiding being killed by the game's vast cast of creatures, there are plenty of traps to avoid and push-button puzzles (push button to open door at other side of level, etc) that must be solved and navigated to reach the exit.

So what are the levels like? Well

the 3-D, complex architecture is probably unlike anything seen on a console. The Quake 3-D engine allows jumping, looking up and down and allows for play in a fully 3-D environment. There is water (you can swim above or under it), multiple level rooms, moving platforms and a variety of object textures and light-sourcing that make the world come to life. Several motifs make up the levels in Quake. The beginning of the game takes place in the "Slipgate Complex," which is comprised of a bright, high-tech, metallic building complete with killer dogs and soldiers. Other levels are more foreboding and dark to the point where you can barely see creatures close enough to kiss you (although that surely won't be their intent).

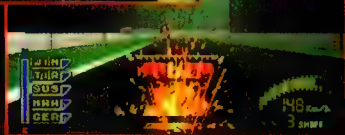
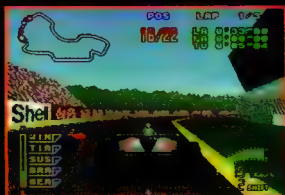
While Internet play was Quake's biggest claim to fame on the PC, it will be interesting to see how console players embrace its console counterpart. Regardless, it appears that Quake is on track to be an outstanding translation, at least as a single-player game. ■



The large and diverse 3-D environments that comprise Quake are quite impressive.

PUBLISHER	Sega
DEVELOPER	Lobotomy
THEME	First-person shooter
PLAYERS	1 or 2
% COMPLETE	70%
RELEASE DATE	September
ALSO ON	None

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Someone please get the guys who make



Possibly the greatest game ever made is available only on PlayStation.™

cartridge games a cigarette and a blindfold.

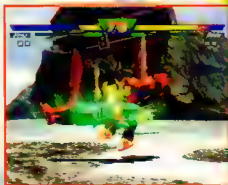


Good thing if it were available on cartridge, it'd retail for around \$1,200.

SQUARESOFT



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This looks like a scene straight out of Tekken or Virtua Fighter.

Street Fighter EX PLUS α

Street Fighting Finally Goes 3-D

Finally, the most popular fighting game series in the history of video games enters the third dimension. Street Fighter EX Plus Alpha is an enhanced version of the arcade title Street Fighter EX Plus. This PlayStation exclusive will have the most number of features and characters yet.

Any Street Fighter aficionado can pick up SFEX+ α instantly. It plays and feels like any of the classics. Gameplay may feel a bit more sluggish than the 2-D games, but this is due to the extra frames of animation each group of polygonal fighters gets treated to. The result is a smooth-moving game that can stand up to the graphical might of the earlier Virtua Fighter games.

The EX series introduces

several new characters to the SF universe, even more than Street Fighter III did. The newbies include pugilists C. Jack and Darun, the acrobatic Skullomania and the rest of the supporting cast of Kain, Garuda, Pullum, Allen, Blair, Hokuto and D. Dark. PlayStation owners also get treated to several extra characters not in the arcade version, including Dhalsim, Sakura and Cycloid Beta and Cycloid Gamma.

Most of the other new fighters have new-looking, never-before-seen moves, but the joystick executions to perform them remain the classic, if not outdated, SF-style. But some of the older moves we've grown used to have been slightly modified. For example, classic Chun-Li's Spinning Bird Kick is now done with a fireball motion (instead of a charge down then up), and each spin of Ken's



Batta got no stick. C. Jack can bat or kick away fireball projectiles.

and Ryu's Hurricane Kick must be performed separately. This may sound like bad news at first, but those of us who have played to death the million previous incarnations of Street Fighter II may welcome the little changes.

Although the arcade fighter saw limited distribution, it was still popular with fans of the long-running Street Fighter series. The name recognition and classic game-play style may instantly elevate Street Fighter EX Plus Alpha above its Tekken and Dynasty Warrior competition. Keep an eye out for this hot polygonal fighter. ■

Gamer's EDGE

The Universal SF Chart

Never played a Street Fighter game before? Want to learn SFEX+ α 's new characters? Well, just memorize the handy universal Street Fighter system below. If you ever want to play a new SF character, or you're just trying out these games for the first time, simply attempt any one of the following moves, and you'll be guaranteed certain success.* All moves are for characters facing right.

↑ ↓ ← → + Button

↑ ↓ ← → + Button

↑ ↓ ← → + Button

↑ ↓ ← → + Button

charge ← → + Button

charge ↑ ↓ + Button

← → ↑ ↓ ← → + Button

← → ↑ ↓ ← → + Button

Gamer's EDGE

Every Street Fighter character now has an unblockable attack. They take up one section of your super combo meter (one-third of a full meter) and are executed by pressing corresponding Punch and Kick buttons at the same time (e.g. Light Punch + Light Kick). If this attack lands, you will automatically dizzy your opponent. This can be used to set up or used in conjunction with any number of manual or super combos.

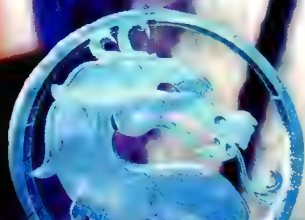


PUBLISHER	Capcom
DEVELOPER	Capcom
THEME	Fighting
PLAYERS	1 or 2
% COMPLETE	70%
RELEASE DATE	October
ALSO ON	None

And there you go. You just learned almost every move for every Street Fighter game! And who said the series was getting redundant?

*chance of actual success: 99.9%

Meet the roof
of our world



MORTAL KOMBAT ALLIANCE

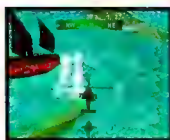
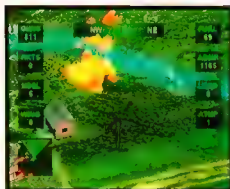
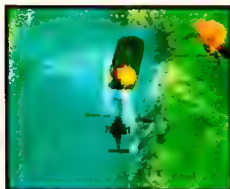
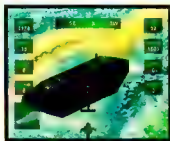
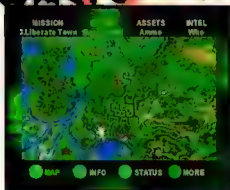
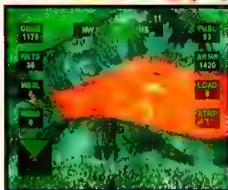
SUB-ZERO

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MIDWAY



PLAYSTATION



Nuclear STRIKE

EA launches A Megaton O' Fun

The first 32-Bit Strike title, Soviet Strike, was a relatively disappointing game. It clearly suffered technically from Electronic Arts' growing pains as they tried to adapt to developing 32-Bit games. From playing Nuclear Strike, it's apparent that many lessons have been learned as the early preview version of this game is already more impressive than its predecessor.

As is implied by the title, Nuclear Strike revolves around a series of missions geared toward stopping a madman from unleashing a nuclear weapon. The story is well interwoven within the game through a series of quick, well-produced video clips between and during missions. In case anyone really cares, many of the same characters from the previous Strike game will return to the sequel, giving the series a sense of continuity.

One of the major flaws of Soviet Strike (according to EA) was that the missions were a little too hard and drawn out. As a result, Nuclear Strike has been designed with an eye for ease of use. The missions are better defined, more supplies are available and the map and mission interface is more intuitive. The Heads-Up Display (HUD) is also improved, making it easier to locate enemies, objectives and other key locations in the impressively large terrain maps.

Although the game has been made a bit more manageable, Nuclear Strike promises to have increased depth. Thirteen different vehicles are available (in addition to the stock Apache) including a tank, a hovercraft, a Harrier jet, the A-10 Warthog, the Huey (chopper) and even a news helicopter (we know how important those can be in a war). Some missions will be very complex,



The scenery in Nuclear Strike is quite elaborate. It looks even prettier when you're burning and blasting it to bits.

involving friendly ground forces and support missions. With so many different combat vehicles and aircraft in the game, the variety of tasks is enormous.

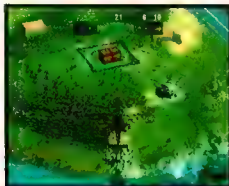
Technically, Nuclear Strike should be a treat for action game fans. The graphics have been improved substantially since the previous Strike game. The terrain now scrolls smoothly (it used to be jerky at times), and the frame rate is much brisker. The explosions are much more spectacular—unfortunate vehicles and buildings are engulfed in flames, which then dissipate to reveal a crater as a sloppy reminder

of your handiwork.

With all of the improvements being made to Nuclear Strike, it looks like this (keep your fingers crossed) will be the game that really makes this series of military action titles shine ■



Notice all of the different vehicles at your disposal, such as the Huey helicopter and the hovercraft.



Here, a rebel army gets ready to unload a crate of guns that must be flown in as one of the objectives.

PUBLISHER	EA
DEVELOPER	EA
THEME	Action
PLAYERS	1
% COMPLETE	80%
RELEASE DATE	September
ALSO ON	None

YOU SEE A NEW ADVENTURE HERO.



YOUR ENEMIES



Help Croc, the crusading crocodile rescue his peace-loving Gobbo Islander friends from the grasp of an evil magician, Baron Dante. Croc must overcome obstacles like lava flows and castle trap doors to battle monsters including swarming sharks to giant bees. Each island world brings a new adventure to Croc, as he hunts for powerful crystals and the pieces to the puzzle that will release his friends from the Baron's spell.



- Free roaming 3D gameplay lets you go anywhere as you run, jump, climb, push, swim and jelly jump!
- Breathtakingly lush graphics in over 50 amazing environments including forests, glaciers, deserts, lava flows and underwater caves.



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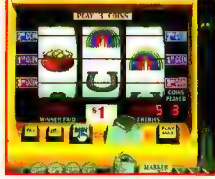
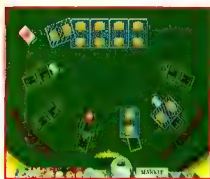
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SEE A NEW SET OF LUGGAGE.

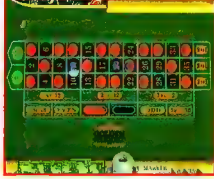


Croc
LEGEND OF THE GOBBOS

PLAYSTATION



The slot machines offer the largest bang for your buck.



Notice the handy money belt at the bottom of the screen.

GOLDEN NUGGET

Gambling For The Masses

Hooray! Finally, budding young gamblers have a game to teach them the ins and outs of Vegas-style gambling! Golden Nugget from Virgin attempts to re-create the actual Golden Nugget Hotel in all its glorious, gaudy splendor using the casino's ornate lobby as a gateway to several different areas of gambling contained within. Start your day off armed with \$10,000 and a willingness to blow it all and you're off to the tables.

The game has two styles: Casino and Chaos Mystery Mode. You have the option to just gamble at random tables and machines or go all out in Chaos Mode, challenging up to five computer players to high-stakes poker games complete with a curious subplot, the mystery of the stolen Chaos computer chip.

Once the fundamentals of gambling are acquired (particularly the poker skills), and a lot of

money has been stockpiled in your money belt, you are then able to access Tournament Mode (a.k.a. Chaos Mystery Mode). This mode will take you into the plotted portion of the game in which FMV clips introduce you to several Vegas types including your new friend and confidant Adam West.

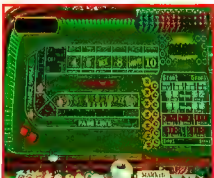
You play the part of Steven Killsbourn, a man intrigued with poker and mystery solving. You'll need to help your ex-girlfriend (also in the game) figure out who stole the Chaos computer chip from one of the suites in the hotel. The magical chip can predict many things, including unknown cards and the roll of the dice. Interacting with the other guests will give you clues as to who is capable of such a crime. Find out who stole the chip and you will solve the mystery and win a boat-load of money.

For the non-nonsense gambler, Casino Mode will satisfy the gambling urge. Try your luck

at any of 16 casino games including: Black Jack, Poker, Slots, Craps, Roulette and several others including the always-exciting Keno. All of the games are 3-D rendered and can be viewed from three different angles.

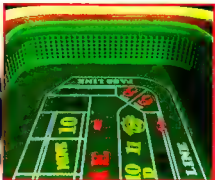
For the most part, the individual game screens are clear of extra windows and extraneous decorations, featuring a simple pop-up purse containing your money divided into denominations. You can access your money purse when betting at tables or feeding the slots and video poker machines. A running tally of your winnings will tell you when you're running low on funds. Also displayed on your purse will be your VIP card (should you be lucky enough to win one). Winning the card is tough being that it costs at least \$50,000. With the card, you can access the high-limit games or the big-money slots.

Competing against the casino is as challenging as the real thing. A large manual will tell you what you need to know if

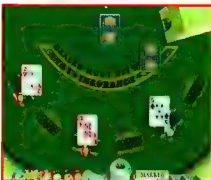


you are unfamiliar with certain games. Yet, even with your skills intact, the odds of hitting three of a kind on the slots or marking your number on the roulette wheel are low and could take a while. Fortunately, it's all free.

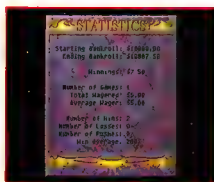
For those who just wish to master the games, in anticipation of gambling with real money some day, Golden Nugget could be your best resource. Of course, we at EGM don't condone, encourage or otherwise support that sort of activity, unless it's done under heavy adult supervision or something. ■



3-D animations re-create the Craps roll as closely as possible.



Black Jack is one of the simplest games to master in Golden Nugget.

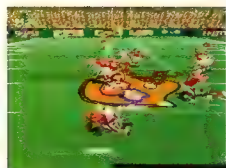


PUBLISHER	Virgin
DEVELOPER	Abalone
THEME	Gambling
PLAYERS	1
% COMPLETE	100%
RELEASE DATE	September
ALSO ON	None

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CLONING SHEEP
DON'T MEAN JACK.



WE CLONED THE DOMINATOR.

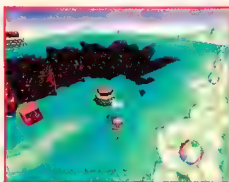
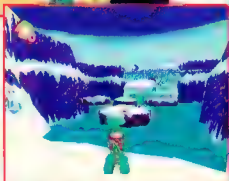
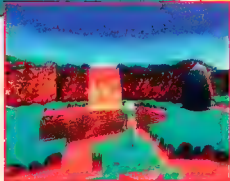
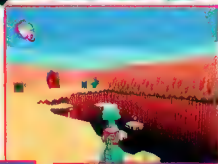
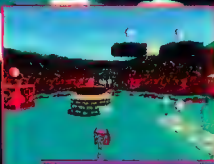
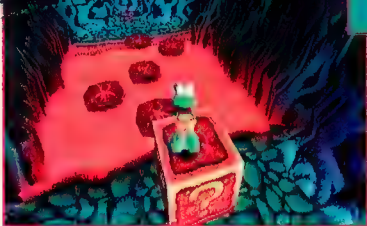
NHL POWERPLAY 98

While pretty close to a goal-dam machine, Dolly — that cloned goalie — really doesn't understand the nuances of the butterfly style. In fact, she's a lot like those other hockey games — the ones where all the little computer guys play the same. Claude Lemieux doesn't check like Brien'Amour in real life, and he doesn't in *NHL Powerplay '98* either. Our Patrick Roy doesn't make glove saves like the Dominator, and you'll have a tough time beating our Buzzer through the five hole. We use the actual styles and abilities of guys like Fedorov, Shanahan, Leetch and every other player in the NHL to deliver the most realistic hockey game ever created. It's real skating, real physics and real action — and it's a helluva lot cooler than cloning sheep. www.nhl.com

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CROC

The Makers Of Star Fox Croc On

OK, so real-life crocodiles ain't all that cute, especially since they have a nasty habit of eating people. But the toothy star of Fox Interactive's

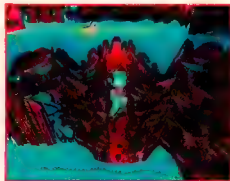
Croc is a kinder, gentler kind of carnivore. Heck, we would say he's sure-shot mascot material, if he didn't face fierce competition from the likes of fellow cutesy 3-D game characters Gex and Jersey Devil (not to mention a certain bandicoot).

Croc is a 3-D, wander-anywhere platform game that's heavy on puzzles and ultracutie enemies. As the crocodilian hero, you can butt stomp on bad guys, swipe them with your tail, pull yourself up Lara Croft-style onto overhangs, swim, cling to drifting balloons, push around crates, perform flips to reverse direction and clamber hand-over-hand under certain platforms (the game also supports Sony's analog pad for more precise control). Most puzzles require you to

activate certain switches to put platforms in motion or shove crates beneath overhanging platforms (here's a tip—don't crush every crate, since you might need to climb it to a caged Gobbo or crystal later).

The game has nearly 50 levels, which are divided among five islands—desert, ice, forest, a secret island and the castle island of Baron Dante. In true bad-guy style, Dante has captured all the islands' peace-loving Gobbos, the sort of fuzzy-face little critters that only a super villain would want to hurt. So you, as Croc, have to rescue the caged Gobbos, six from each level. You'll also find crystals that'll build up your health. When enemies nail you, your crystals scatter everywhere. So, just like Sonic and his rings, you won't die as long as you have at least one crystal.

Levels are divided into separate arenas, most with a puzzle or two that you'll need to clear. The arenas are fairly small, and what Croc does in one—say he activates a switch, for instance—may affect another. Counting all the regular and secret levels, there are 200



Croc's webbed feet allow for him to climb in certain areas of the game.

individual game arenas in all. And some arenas have Croc doing more than solving puzzles and scaling platforms. A few have him swimming through submerged caves, and there are even a few snowboarding levels.

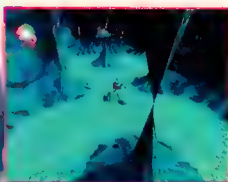
Croc is being developed by Argonaut, the company that designed the Super FX Chip for Nintendo (which was used in Star Fox) that pumped up that system's polygon-pushing power. Croc looks like further proof that these boys know their stuff when it comes to developing 3-D games. ■

Gamer's EDGE

It's a Secret

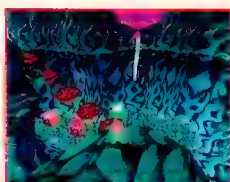
You're gonna have to do a little work to rescue all six of each level's Gobbos. One of these critters is hidden in its own secret level, which lies behind the locked door; you'll find near each regular level's exit. To open these doors, you'll need to collect the five colored gems that are scattered throughout the regular levels.

But the secrets don't stop there. If you open each secret level and rescue its hidden Gobbo, you'll be granted access to an entire secret island!

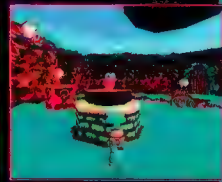


What would a game about a croc be without an underwater stage?

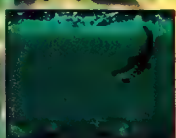
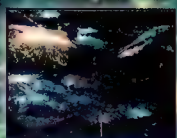
PUBLISHER	FOX Interactive
DEVELOPER	Argonaut
THEME	Action
PLAYERS	1
% COMPLETE	95%
RELEASE DATE	October
ALSO ON	Saturn



Balloons can be used to travel across steep drops and large chasms.



There are six Gobbos hidden away in each main area of Croc.



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-EGM GUIDE TO SPORTS VIDEO GAMES



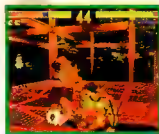
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VS.

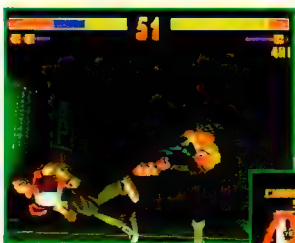


T*HQ Makes Fighting Short And Sweet

Who needs all those crazy, long names that talk about "super alpha" this and "battle arena" that? When it comes down to it, all that fighting games are about are fighting—one player against another player. So what better name to use for a fighter than "Vs."?

In Vs., players can fight in 12 different arenas—three arenas in each of the gang's "hoods." The various arenas put players in anywhere from a construction site, where the animated background adds a sense of depth to the level, to the outside of a library near a college. Each of the four sets of three reflects the style of the gang they're based on (i.e., the campus gang areas look like college grounds where the hoods fight in heavily urbanized areas).

The fighters in the game come from four different gangs. There are 16 characters to choose from and four additional characters that



become available after each gang is beat (the gang leaders from the four gangs).

Vs. runs at 60 FPS, so look for realistic animation. On top of this, the characters' moves were motion-captured to insure fluidity. Each character has a real-life fighting style. Some include kung-fu, jujitsu and wrestling, among others. And really, there's nothing nicer than seeing a young college girl using karate on a street thug.

There are six different play

modes you can choose from. The first, a standard one-player vs. CPU, is self-explanatory, but the later modes allow players to compete in a Survival Mode where the members of one gang get to fight against

course (since this is all about some fist-to-fist gang fighting). Three of the four buttons are used for attacks and the fourth button is used for blocking.

Adding to the rebellious youth motif is the soundtrack to Vs. Some of the songs reflect the hectic mood of street fighting (or the hard, techno sound of violence). The bands doing the music for the game are Pigs In Space, Razed In Black, Los Infernos and Suicide Machines. Keep an eye for them in stores already. ■



Nowadays, gangs have a bunch of regular-looking kids in them...kinda.

versions of themselves. Another mode, the one-player Rumble Mode, allows a player to choose the gang and then use that gang's four players to fight a rival gang.

The control is similar to Soul Blade but without the weapons of

Gamer's EDGE

There are four gangs which the characters in Vs. come from. They are the Beach gang, the Hood gang, the Campus gang and the Streets gang. Each gang has its own style of fighters. The Hood has urban-influenced thugs with an "in-your-face" fighting style, whereas the Beach gang has its own set of combatants and style. Once a gang is picked, the player can choose what character from that gang they want to be. Then yet another option is presented: where they want to fight.



Every time you take out the enemy, blood spews from his/her neck. Hmm.



Wearing one striped sock is the "in" thing to do when you're in a gang.

PUBLISHER	T*HQ
DEVELOPER	Polygon Magic
THEME	Action
PLAYERS	1 or 2
% COMPLETE	60%
RELEASE DATE	November
ALSO ON	None

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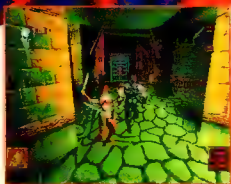
It seems elegance, excitement, and 16 games of chance can actually fit inside one video game. That's right, finally a casino game has been created for the Sony PlayStation game console. Luckily that game is the Golden Nugget, featured in its opulent brass and marble environment. Saunter into this virtual Las Vegas casino, and play Blackjack, Craps, 7 Card Stud and more. And play them all with the odds and payoffs you'd really have in Vegas. You'll also get to solve a mystery with Adam West. From your living room, no less. It's just part of the privilege of owning Vegas, the one in the convenient take-home size.

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Sure, they're hot babes, but they'll kill you in a second if you let 'em.



Don't pet the spider (even though it's furry) cuz it'll eat you up!

Deathtrap DUNGEON

Lots of Killin' But With A Point

It slices and dices, but that's not all—especially considering *Deathtrap Dungeon* is brought to us by Eidos (makers of *Tomb Raider*) and Ian Livingstone, popular writer of the *Fighting Fantasy* book series.

Deathtrap Dungeon is Eidos' new 3-D action adventure title that's based on Livingstone's popular fantasy books that have sold millions upon millions of copies worldwide. In fact, one of them in particular was called *Deathtrap Dungeon*.

The version we have is extremely early, so expect plenty of changes. The 3-D environments take place in a medieval dungeon. The

graphics in the game are a cross between *Tomb Raider* and *Excalibur*. *Deathtrap Dungeon* should have dramatic lighting with plenty of diversity in mood, but to what extent we have not yet seen in this revision.

The levels have a whole slew of fearsome enemies. Some we've seen in this early version are sword-wielding babes and hulking rockmen. Others that should appear in the finished product are zombies, spiders, necromancers and mummies, among others. *Deathtrap Dungeon* will have 10 levels in the finished version with over 50 characters (enemies mostly) inhabiting them.

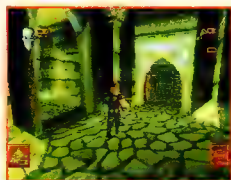
Character development is an important part of everything Ian Livingstone has his hands in. The characters in *Deathtrap Dungeon* won't be any different, but story isn't all that will have a high degree of detail. Look for fluid animations and a complex polygonal cast. There will be plenty of character-based moves (depending on the weapon being used).

The camera in *Deathtrap*

Dungeon is a "smart cam" where the camera moves according to the player position, ideally without creating an awkward view for the player. This camera movement should provide the best shot of an enemy kill, or perhaps your own player's demise.

The enemies are no dummies either. In fact, some of them, even in this early demo we received, are incredibly smart. As you swing, the enemy warrior jumps back and then comes forward to counter. In some cases they even did the splits to avoid an attack and then came back to slash a chunk out of your side.

The complex combat system in *Deathtrap Dungeon* will feature sword fighting, spell casting and close-quarters combat, among others. Besides the enemies, the levels themselves want a piece of you—look for traps including covered pits, hidden corridors, false floors and moving spikes. Expect more on this one as it nears completion. ■



Intricate dungeons will have you getting lost time and time again.

Behind The SCREENS

First the book, now the game

So who is this Ian Livingstone character? It all started in the '70s when Livingstone threw away his job marketing for a large American Oil Company to sell RPGs (the board game kind). A close friend, Steve Jackson, did the same thing (except he was a biologist), and slowly the business they started in a seedy flat (and in the back of a van for several months) turned into the \$200 million business known as Games Workshop—and they're still around today. In selling games and writing many books (the *Fighting Fantasy* series), Livingstone and Jackson could've easily retired but chose not to because of their love for their job (or should we say their hobby). After some time the company grew to make PC and console products based on their popular RPGs. Now Livingstone's book, *Deathtrap Dungeon*, is becoming a PlayStation title. Many say Livingstone and Jackson are a couple of the lucky ones to turn their hobby into something profitable. *EGM* will have to correct them by saying skilled instead of lucky.

PUBLISHER	Eidos
DEVELOPER	Eidos U.K.
THEME	Adventure
PLAYERS	1
% COMPLETE	60%
RELEASE DATE	November
ALSO ON	None

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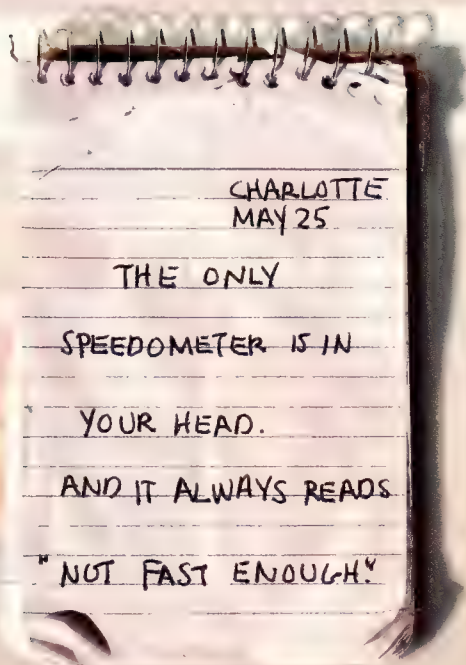
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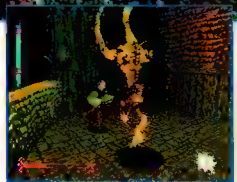
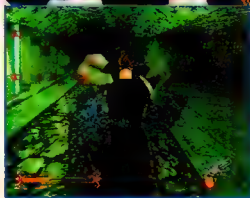
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Before the wall stamps "A little too fast" into your sheet metal, you might want to take a few practice laps.



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NIGHTMARE CREATURES

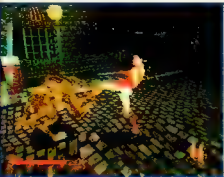
Wolves, Spiders And Vamps, Oh My!

Imagine yourself running through a dark alley, finding your way through a thick coating of fog, a four-foot spear swinging at your side.

You turn a corner, nearly fall on the slippery cobblestone and look up, only to find yourself eye-to-snout with a lifelike werewolf. Are you dreaming?

You might be. But chances are you're playing Activision's upcoming title—which they picked up from European-based developer, Kalisto—the aptly named *Nightmare Creatures*.

What's so special about carrying weapons and being chased around by a bunch of hideous freaks, you ask? Plenty, if the monsters taunt and torment you in a video game experience that has been likened to a cross between *Tomb Raider* and *Resident Evil*. As such composites go, the outcome can either be an unwanted mongrel or a new breed that possesses the best possible attributes of both.



It may look like a show of love, but he's actually trying to eat her foot.

In this case, gamers would no doubt hope to see *Resident Evil*'s surroundings coupled with *Tomb Raider*'s free-roaming expanses. But be wary—the world has been promised to video game players before.

For example, ASC's (not quite) *Perfect Weapon* was once marked as "Tekken 2 meets *Resident Evil*." Of course the final product fell short of both, containing only a few minor similarities both in terms of gameplay and general design.

Nightmare Creatures will place you in and around 19th-century London, where you'll search for beasts and ogres sent by the clandestine Brotherhood of Heccate. This gothic adventure will have you don the robe of Ignatius the monk or assume the battle garb of Nadia, a woman who's great with a sword (but not allowed to join the holy brotherhood).

Sound fictitious? Only partially. The environments have been re-created from actual 19th-century maps and blueprints



Even priests sometimes pack heat, if evil is getting in their way.



to best present the true architectural feel of the time period, but the creatures you combat, using swords and staffs, are entirely imaginary.

The camera will tag closely behind your character in this single-player game as you scurry through the dark graveyards, dank alleys and immense cathedrals as they existed in the 1800s in England—the audio and lighting effects adding to the already stunning ambience. But this game is more than just a pretty facade—that is, when you decapitate, rend and dismember your opposition.

It's clear that this title has the makings of a hit with flair and a sense of originality. ■

Gamer's EDGE

Attacks

Most of the characters' moves are no more than a tap, tap, tap style with Ignatius or Nadia going into a flurry of attacks afterward. At first you'll keep saying, "Wow, did I do that?" But then after awhile, some technique creeps in there...some. Nonetheless, you can impress your friends with the crazy sword swipes and kung-fu kicks. Both Ignatius and Nadia are able to use their weapons to decapitate (or in other cases take off limbs or sever torsos) the competition. With all of these neat-o attacks comes the Block button. If all you do is constantly attack, you'll die quickly since the enemies tend to be smart (even though some of them are dead).



PUBLISHER	Activision
DEVELOPER	Kalisto
THEME	Action/Adv.
PLAYERS	1
% COMPLETE	65%
RELEASE DATE	October
ALSO ON	None

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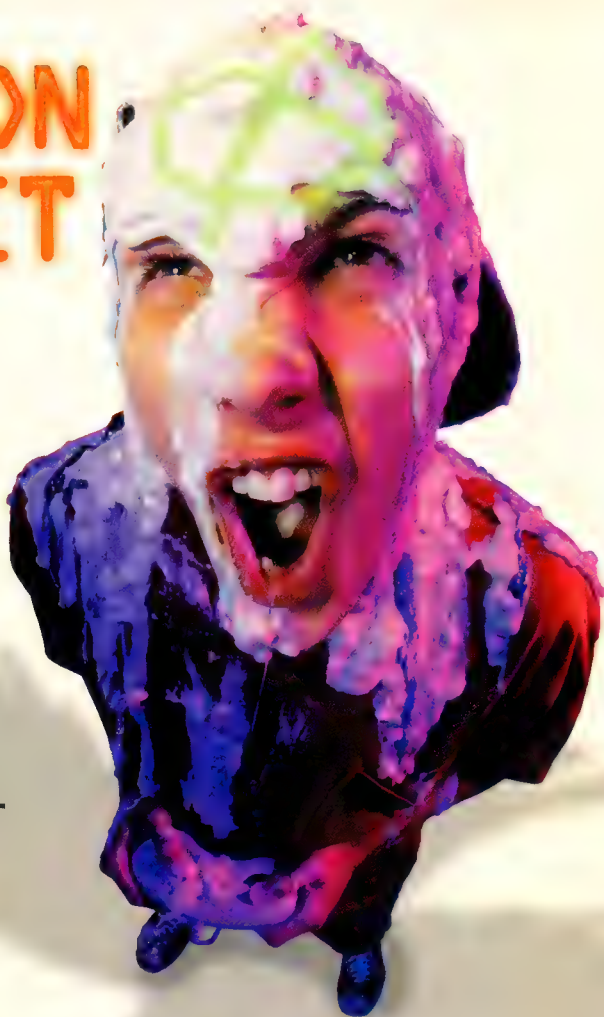
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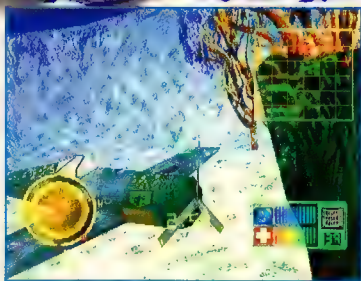
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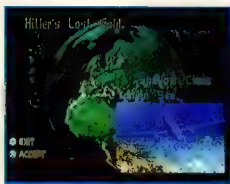
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Ah, the things found at the bottom of the sea. Here's an old biplane. Maybe you can rustle up an entire airforce.

TREASURES OF THE DEEP

Jacques Cousteau With An Attitude



Treasures of the Deep isn't the normal fare you've come to expect from Namco (in fact it's actually developed by Black Ops Entertainment). Even better, it's quite a departure from any game found on the PlayStation.

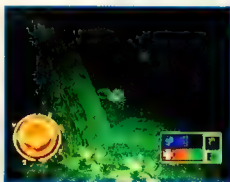
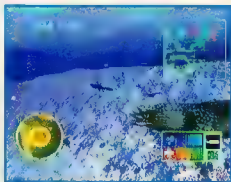
This watery 3-D game (whose atmosphere is reminiscent of *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*) puts you in control of an ex-Navy Seal who spans the globe looking for treasure in the most curious of locations. From his submerged home base, missions are selected and so is the appropriate equipment for the task on hand. There are many different ways to outfit your armament and tools. In the Weapons Selection Screen anything from nets to plasma torpedoes to land mines can be

had—for a price. Equipment such as sonars, flares and even an underwater torch can also be purchased. Once a large amount of money is in the bank, expensive fancy subs and watercraft can also be purchased. All of these things are financed through the treasure found on missions, so it is important to collect as much as possible on each one.

By spinning a 3-D globe, different missions can be selected. Usually there is only a choice between one or two, and as those missions are completed, new ones open up. The different tasks are quite diverse ranging from simply finding treasure within a sunken boat, to racing against time to deliver and place a time bomb that will destroy a path to—you guessed it—more treasure. As the game progresses, more "meaning-

ful" missions are revealed, such as having to defuse a nuclear warhead and retrieving a lost satellite.

Treasures of the Deep's gameplay is half exploration, half 3-D action. There are hordes of dangers in the water aside from the requisite hungry



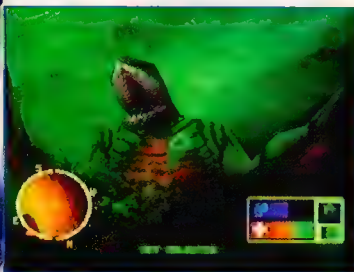
In later levels, your missions take place in more hazardous territory.

sharks (and watch out for those jellyfish too). Other divers are out to plunder the same bounty, and they'll kill you to get it. They also seemingly have a limitless amount of resources (maybe they've been treasure hunting a lot longer than you have) as the enemy scuba divers are often accompanied by squadrons of fancy subs and other high-tech weapons. When these subs are destroyed, their equipment and weapons can be plundered from the wreckage (the scuba guys die in a satisfying poof that attracts sharks).

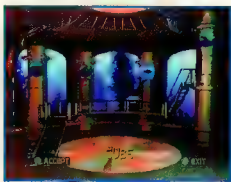
The graphics and atmosphere in *Treasures* are quite impressive. The 3-D aquatic life (comprised of sharks, eels, fish, etc.) is very

detailed, especially when it comes to re-creating the fluid movements you might expect from those fish. The worlds are colorful and detailed, garnished with light-sourcing and other effects. As the missions progress into more mysterious territory, the dark, foreboding graphics reveal monsters and other impressive objects such as a downed Space Shuttle (you can't be that).

Namco's *Treasures of the Deep* is a fancy, new underwater game that looks like it has the gameplay and aesthetics to complement its very unique game concept. ■



In addition to the tamer sea life such as sharks, there's big, scary, green things like this lurking around.



PUBLISHER	Namco
DEVELOPER	Black Ops
THEME	Action
PLAYERS	1
% COMPLETE	85%
RELEASE DATE	September
ALSO ON	None



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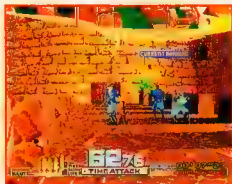
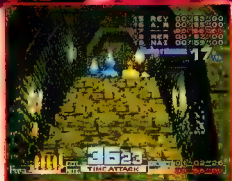
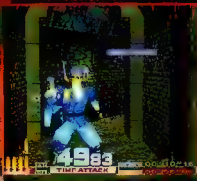
RP
17



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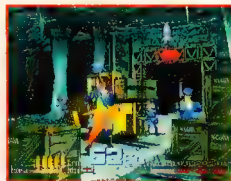
PLAYSTATION



Time CRISIS

Ready, Aim And Fire—Really Fast!

There are plenty of cookie-cutter light-gun games on the market, and although Time Crisis doesn't offer anything revolutionary, it does deliver a few new twists to the 3-D light-gun game genre. For starters, Time Crisis is heavier in story than other light gun games. You assume the role of Richard Miller, a "one-man army" who must break into the castle to rescue Rachel, a kidnapped damsel. Now that you have enough motive to knock large holes into a lot of bad guys, let's discuss how exactly it's done (aside from pulling the trigger a lot). Time Crisis' gameplay lives up to its name: The game takes a very frantic pace, because each gaggle of enemies must be wiped out in a certain amount of time before you are allowed to advance



Shooting the crate on the forklift will wipe out all the baddies.

further in the level. This is especially hard because many of the enemies are constantly firing upon you, forcing you to take cover behind objects (by hitting a red button beneath the barrel of your gun). Although taking cover will save your hide, it costs precious seconds. Also, you must take cover to reload your gun, so firing wildly will cause the loss of precious seconds. Hiding behind objects, then popping out to return fire does makes the game seem more realistic, as it is hard to fathom that you wouldn't want to take cover behind objects while under heavy gunfire (unlike other gun games where you usually casually walk through levels like a zombie).

The 3-D environments in Time Crisis are very detailed, and consist of many moving parts and elaborate decorations. There isn't a whole lot of interaction with them, however. Windows can be shot out, and you may encounter cranes and cars occasionally



It's times like these when you wish Time Crisis gave you grenades.

(you're supposed to dodge them). But beyond that, interaction with the 3-D world is confined to just shooting the baddies within it. Also odd is that there are no power-ups in the game, so the only tools at your disposal are a trusty handgun and a few explosive crates.

In addition to its Arcade Mode, Time Crisis includes a Story Mode and a Time Attack Mode that times your progress through levels. Also cool are the multiple endings determined by how well you did during the game. Best of all, you get Namco's snazzy new light gun (see sidebar). ■

PUBLISHER	Namco
DEVELOPER	Namco
THEME	Action
PLAYERS	1
% COMPLETE	95%
RELEASE DATE	October
ALSO ON	None

Gamer's Edge

Packed-in Heat

Time Crisis is a game that relies on precise aiming (even more than many other light gun games), so it's a good thing that the weapon needed for this game is also the most accurate light gun game on the PlayStation. Named the "Guncon," Namco's light gun has an additional attachment that connects to the PlayStation's video out. The other side of the adapter is where the video cord connects, completing the circuit. This is in addition to the gun's connection to the PlayStation's controller input. Also unique to the gun is the button layout below either side of the gun's barrel. Two red buttons labeled "A" and "B" are nestled on the gun in optimal positions for Time Crisis' gameplay. One button is used for ducking behind things, and the other is merely used to serve as a pause button.





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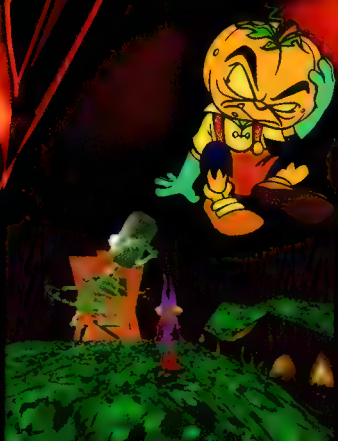
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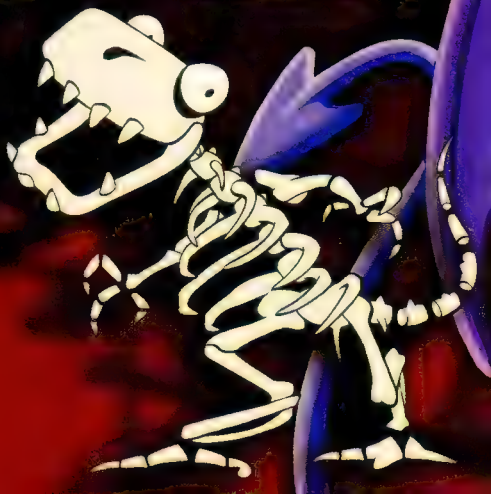
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THE BEAST IS LOOSE

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— *P.S.Y.*, August '97

"The game uses large 3D levels in a variety of unique styles (...) filled with traps and enemies that pose a serious challenge to the player!"

— *Next Generation Online*, May '97

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— *PS Extreme*, July '97

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PaRappa the RAPPER

Love, Friendship And Diarrhea

Did the subhead catch your attention? Well, if it didn't, PaRappa the Rapper will. This monster musical hip-hop hit has already caught on like wildfire in Japan and is making a stir with the few in the know here (importers, the press, etc.). But the rest of you won't have to wait long. SCEA plans to release PaRappa in the U.S. this winter.

PaRappa is a young two-dimensional puppy who moves around 3-D environments like a floating Colorform. His ultimate goal is to become a hero in the eyes of his cute crush. To do so, he must win a series of rap challenges, each one more difficult than the last.

In each of the six stages, an adult will face off with PaRappa to test his skills. For example in stage one, Chop Chop Master Onion, the odoriferous kung-fu master, teaches young PaRappa



A triple negative and the word "ain't"? It's PaRappabonics!

basic martial arts. How this works in actual gameplay is really quite simple. Chop Chop will start rapping various lyrics which PaRappa must duplicate perfectly. When Chop Chop sings, a bar with joy-pad button symbols will appear with a sliding marker. When the marker passes over a symbol, he will rap a particular word. When the marker reaches the end, it becomes PaRappa's turn to rap. A duplicate bar appears with a new slider. Your job is to hit the correct joy-pad button as the marker slides over the corresponding symbol, thus successfully rapping in sync with your teachers. Like we said: simple. So how can such a no-brainer be such a hit?

It's really the music and story line that makes PaRappa so memorable. All of the music came from a recording studio in New York (yes, the Japanese version of PaRappa had the same English lyrics). The rappers all sound like professionals. In fact, a few people



Nothing worse than closing your eyes during a photo opportunity.

in EGM commented that the driving instructor sounds exactly like rap-star-gone-actress, Queen Latifah. The tunes and riffs will give you the same impression: Sony didn't spare any expense in recording this original and top-notch music.

The story line follows PaRappa in his adventures to become a hero. Along the way, he has to learn kung-fu, get a driver's license, earn money, bake a cake and find a bathroom...quick (remember our subhead?). The delivery of the story is a funny and unique experience that must be seen and heard to be appreciated.

One of the few games that require hand-eye-ear coordination, PaRappa is a truly unique title that may be worthy of the hype it's getting. He's already a big hit in Japan, and SCEA is hoping for a repeat performance here. Will he become big enough to replace Crash Bandicoot as Sony's mascot? Probably not (at

PaRappa STATS

650

The exact number of joy-pad button presses required to win PaRappa without error.

Much Higher

The number of key presses it takes an EGM editor to finish PaRappa.

463,243

The top speed of a Super Stretched Limo 900.

5

The number of stages (out of six) in which PJ Berni is eating.

90.9

The percentage of EGM staffers who love PaRappa.

700,000

The number of PaRappa the Rapper games sold in the Japanese market so far.

100,000

The number of units that must be sold in one market for it to be considered a bona-fide "hit."

least not right away with Crash 2 coming out soon), but PaRappa certainly has what it takes to win over the hearts of countless gamers everywhere. ■



PUBLISHER	SCEA
DEVELOPER	Sony Music Japan
THEME	Musical
PLAYERS	1
% COMPLETE	100%
RELEASE DATE	November
ALSO ON	None



EVIL PAYS



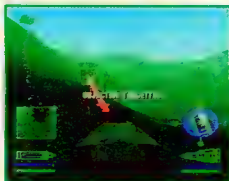
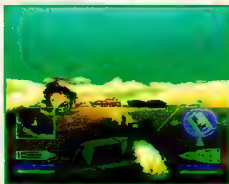
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STEEL REIGN

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Steel Reign offers an incredible number of tanks and all-terrain vehicles you can use to combat the enemy. The 11 tanks you can choose from differ in speed, armor, shields and shells, so it's up to you to choose which one you are most comfortable with. The big burly tanks are more for beginners, because they offer more firepower along with the security of thicker shields. The smaller, quicker tanks are for advanced gunners and allow you to strike fast and get the hell out before you get blown to smithereens.

Each tank offers you different



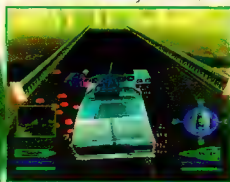
weapons, including ion cannons, massive machine guns, smart bombs, heat-seeking missiles, high-tech laser blasts and an array of other ammunition which blast Buick-size holes in enemies. The most unique weapon is a guided missile that you can actually fly to the target yourself. But don't think you can just maul through the enemies with guns and missiles blazing, because you can run out of just about every weapon except your puny little machine gun. And don't expect to blow up too many tanks with bullets. This adds strategy to the game, so think wisely and don't use your heavy weaponry



until absolutely necessary.

One key to success in Steel Reign is your ability to target and destroy the enemy without losing maneuverability. You can do this by turning the tank's turret, which can be rotated 360 degrees and elevated up and down. Sure, driving and shooting in two different directions takes some getting used to, but it's a skill worth mastering.

Battles take place in 3-D deserts, mountains, cities and forests, and the battlegrounds are full of hidden bases, radar installations, fuel refineries and intelligence buildings. There's also a two-player, Split-Screen Mode for some tank-busting deathmatch mayhem. ■



Roll over enemy troopers and watch the blood splatter.



Fire a missile and guide it to the targeted destination.

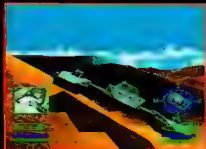
PUBLISHER	SCEA
DEVELOPER	SISA
THEME	Action
PLAYERS	1 or 2
% COMPLETE	75%
RELEASE DATE	September
ALSO ON	None

Gamer's EDGE

Which Tank To Choose?

Before you even start playing the game you have a very important decision to make: which tank to choose. Steel Reign offers 11 different tanks, all of which are equally adept at annihilating the enemy. It's up to you to decide which tank you think will get you past the enemy. Most of these tanks are actually named after poisonous snakes, such as the Venom, Viper, Copperhead, Diamond Back, etc. Different methods of terminating the enemy come with each tank.

For instance, the Copperhead is a big, heavy tank that provides you with a load of ammunition and protection. This is an in-your-face kinda tank that bowls over anything in its path. Maneuverability is slow, so you can't duck enemy crossfire very well. The Venom is more of an elusive tank that almost hovers above the terrain and is as fast as they get. With this comes less artillery and less armor for safety. So choose your tank wisely and operate it to its fullest.





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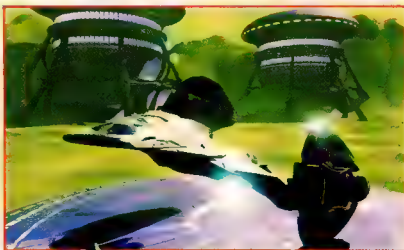
*Contains 3 extra tracks
that were banned
from the original



Insane Clown Posse the Great milenko



PLAYSTATION



COLONY WARS

A Space Shooter With Style

Psygnosis may be hyping G-Police as their key, take-no-prisoners Christmas title, but the jaw-dropping Colony Wars certainly won't hide

in its shadow. This explosive space combat sim turned plenty of heads at E³ with its hi-res graphics and ultra-bright lighting effects and is easily one of the show's most promising titles.

Yes, Colony Wars is similar to the Wing Commander games, complete with several rendered cinemas narrated by a guy who must be the best James Earl Jones impersonator on the planet. But the game's visuals, designed by the same artists who worked on Krazy Ivan and WipeOut, are light-years ahead of what we've seen in the WC ports. Explosions and laser blasts are so vibrant they'll light your living room, while enemy ship-sloosh straight out of *Star Trek*.

The space environment itself looks especially convincing, with shimmering planets, moons, asteroids and suns.



Watch that crossfire boys! CW's space is one enemy-crammed place.

You'll battle through five solar systems over the course of the game, and each is realistically scaled; fly toward a distant planet long enough and you'll eventually crash into it (try that in Wing Commander IV). And you get all these visual perks in high-res, 30 frames per second.

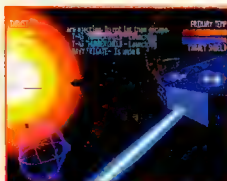
Colony Wars' story, told through 25 prerendered cinemas, set several centuries hence, when humanity has spread from Earth to innumerable, far-flung colony planets. Yet Earth's government still maintains a stranglehold on the galaxy, and the colonists are fed up with slaving away for the mother planet (it's that whole taxation-without-representation thing that got England in trouble about two centuries ago). So they form the League of Free Worlds and revolt, thus dropping you into the pilot's seat of one of six



With its snazzy weapons, CW is like WipeOut meets Wing Commander.

different ships to take on Earth's armada. Ship types include standard and stealth fighters, nimble scouts, bombers and heavy assault gunboats, each with its own weapons and virtual cockpit (although out of-cockpit views are available).

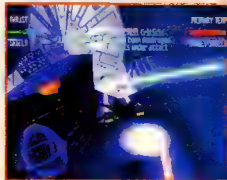
Colony Wars packs 70 missions, divided among 18 acts. These missions—which feature plenty of digitized radio chatter—follow a non-linear structure; your degree of success in one sortie will determine what happens in the next. Depending on which mission path you follow, you'll see one of six different endings. Six



Go ahead—stare at the sun. Lighting effects are eye-poppingly brilliant.

additional training missions teach the ins and outs of zero-g dog-fighting, as well.

You'll need the practice, too, because spaceflight in Colony Wars is pretty darn realistic. Your ship obeys the laws of inertia, and will keep cruising in the same direction you last trusted (a sweet tactic during strafing runs). No, you don't have to be a NASA shuttle jockey to play the game, but the true-to-physics flight is just another perk in this already highly polished package. ■



Hmm. I saw that enemy ship in *Star Trek*, right? Or was it *Babylon 5*?

PUBLISHER	Psygnosis
DEVELOPER	Psygnosis-LP
THEME	Space Combat
PLAYERS	1
% COMPLETE	80%
RELEASE DATE	November
ALSO ON	None

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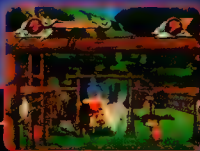
Disney's HERCULES Action Game

Zeus has answered your prayers. And now, it's time to take your place among the gods in this hot new PlayStation™ game console adventure. Explore three worlds of 3-D gameplay right out of Disney's Hercules movie—with the original character voices, sound effects and music. Mangle monsters like Hydra and the Cyclops. Terminate the Titans. Save Thebes from a hostile takeover. Hey, this game can make you immortal!

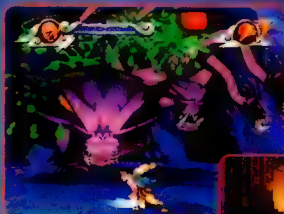
Survive the Hero-killing Gamolies.



Watch out for snake-headed Medusa and her flaming Venom Spit.



Real-time 3-D landscapes and special effects are cool when you're protecting Mt. Olympus from a fire-breathing Titan attack.



Slay multiple heads as you face the vicious Hydra.

Defeat your enemies with your Power Sword.



Thank God or the Cyclops will get you.



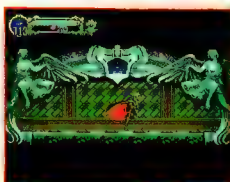
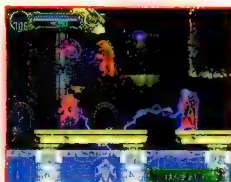
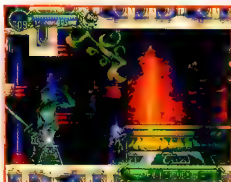
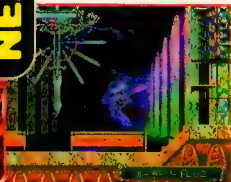
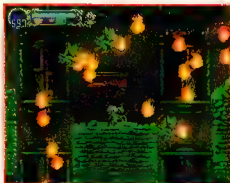
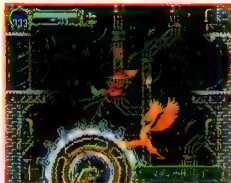
Includes special five-color disc.



Also available on PC CD-ROM.



PLAYSTATION



The game loads new levels via innovative "CD access" halls. Smart!

CASTLEVANIA: SYMPHONY OF THE NIGHT

A Moonlight Stroll With Alucard

It's been four months since we previewed the Japanese version of *Castlevania: Symphony of the Night* (known as *Dracula X: Nocturne in the Moonlight* overseas), and already Konami's managed to get to us a near-complete English version of the game.

Symphony of the Night is the sequel to a rare PC Engine game that was never released in the U.S. called *Dracula X: The Rondo of Blood*. It's hailed by many die-hard gamers as one of the best side-scrolling

action titles of all time, and easily the best *Castlevania* game of them all. A stripped-down, pale-by-comparison "port" was released for the Super NES in 1995, but it was a mere shadow of the game it was based on. Fortunately, the PlayStation sequel is as good as, if not better than its predecessor.

Symphony of the Night takes place five years after the first *Dracula X*. The main character this time around is Alucard, Dracula's son and one of the main characters of *Castlevania III: Dracula's Curse* for the NES. While the gameplay is essentially classic *Castlevania* (thank God), a host of enhancements have been thrown in to really add to the overall play experience. First up is the ability to equip weapons and armor. Alucard can equip swords and shields, staves, two-handed weapons, projectile weapons, various rings and necklaces, and even a custom cape that allows you to change the colors of your mantle during play (and Joseph thought his technicolor dreamcoat was cool...yeah right). You can also gather an assortment of useful and interesting items throughout the game, and get help from any one of up to seven little helpers (including a bat, a demon, a sword and a faerie). Additionally, you will obtain items as you progress that let you change into one of three forms—wolf, bat or mist. Finally, the game as a whole plays more

like *Super Metroid* than it does like previous *Castlevanias*; that is, you can travel anywhere about the castle freely (more or less; some areas can't be accessed right away of course), rather than moving from set stage to set stage, allowing for a longer, more satisfying quest.

Now, onto the changes we've found since the Japanese version was released. First of all, Konami is planning on tweaking the AI a bit to make the game more difficult (the Japanese version was a bit on the easy side). Next, they've added a Sound Test to the game (accessible at the shopkeeper's area in the Library) that allows you to listen to all of the game's great tunes. And finally, the fatal bug that was in the Japanese version was removed from the U.S. one. There will still be five different endings you can obtain, and yes, if you're real good, you'll be able to play the game as some other characters beside Alucard.

Castlevania is one of the most influential video games in history, and this may very well be the best

version yet (yes, even better than the amazing PC Engine version). Be sure to check back next issue when we'll have the Review Crew's thoughts on the final version of the game. ■

Gamer's EDGE

Be sure to check out the Enemy List in the Library every now and then. It keeps a list of every enemy you've seen, and if you've already obtained them at least once, the items they drop. If you're striving to find all of the items in the game, this is the best way to check up on what you're still missing and where to look for it.



Later on in the game, you may want to use the Enemy List to track down hard-to-find weapons and items.



PUBLISHER	Konami
DEVELOPER	Konami
THEME	Action
PLAYERS	1
% COMPLETE	80%
RELEASE DATE	October
ALSO ON	None

HUMILITY TASTES
A LOT LIKE
ASPHALT.

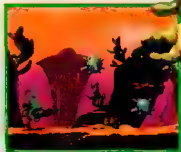


HITS THE STREETS IN OCTOBER.



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PLAYSTATION



ODD WORLD: ABE'S ODDYSEE

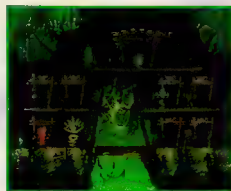
It's quite possible that there has never been a more aptly named game in all of video game history than *Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee*. Why?

You have Abe, the hero, in a very odd world on a very odd odyssey.

Apt name or not, Abe's *Oddsee* has all the makings of a classic title: well-developed, great-looking main character, an interesting story line with history and depth, and finally a cast of cool enemies and allies.

The gameplay is similar to *Flashback*, but those similarities are only skin deep. *Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee* is the first in what GT Interactive calls a new genre of game, the A.L.I.V.E. system. A.L.I.V.E. stands for *Aware Lifeforms In Virtual Entertainment*. The game, GT says, plays like a movie. There are climactic points and calm points and the music, character moods and overall feelings match these moments, all in realtime.

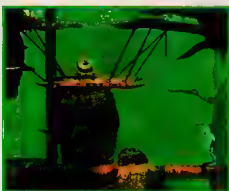
For instance, if Abe's just walk-



How's Abe supposed to know which door to choose? Trial and error...

ing along minding his own business, the mood is low key. But if an enemy pops out, a short burst of music and a growl announces the beginning of what's sure to be an action-packed sequence. Remember that Abe's *Oddsee* is a puzzle game first and foremost, so your brains are what'll be having a workout, not your trigger finger (although there's a fair amount of blood spilling on the ground at times).

There are plenty of levels, each progressively more difficult than the next. But that's OK. Offworld



It may not look like it, but even these bees are in highly detailed CG.

Entertainment encourages dying in the game, since you have unlimited lives. Try it, and if you die, try again until you solve that particular puzzle. The first few levels even provide a tutorial for first-time *Oddworld* residents.

To add to the interactivity of the title, players can even make Abe talk to friends and enemies, and they respond in one way or another. Not only is talking an option, so is whistling, growling and farting (yes, farting).

Abe's *Oddsee*'s graphics are fully

rendered and highly stylized.

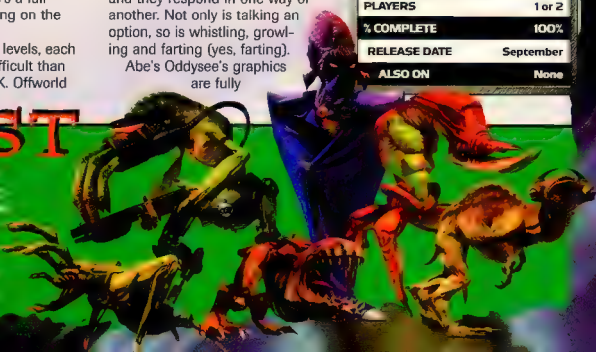
Sure, the industrial-looking zones certainly look industrial and the forests look like forests, but everything in the game has an *Oddworld* feel. Once you see this, you'll understand what we mean.

Offworld Entertainment's founders, Sherry McKenna and Lorne Lanning, both have backgrounds in computer-generated imagery and animation and have worked with feature films and TV productions (among many other things). It's easy to see (after playing the game) that neither of them, nor the entire Abe's team, are running short on imagination and vision. ■

PUBLISHER	GT Interactive
DEVELOPER	Oddworld Inhabitants
THEME	Action
PLAYERS	1 or 2
% COMPLETE	100%
RELEASE DATE	September
ALSO ON	None

THE CAST

The *Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee* is a very fun game to play, but they certainly aren't your run-of-the-mill characters. Each of them has their own unique style, so you learn them just by being either a "bad guy" or "good guy." For example, Abe can really annoy a slug by chanting, and then he actually becomes the slug. On the flip side, the slugs will cackle if they pick Abe.



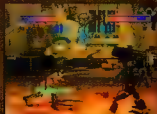
Eve Be Nimble, Eve Be Quick, Or Eve Be Sliced by Gore's Big Stick.



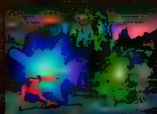
DARK RIFT

Dark Rift brings out the best in people. Eve works her butt off to turn Gore into a meaty pin cushion. Gore busts his gut to move Eve into the path of his axe. And you'll need your best, because **Dark Rift** gives it up. **Dark Rift** delivers more fight, more often with more speed than you have ever seen before. Check out **Dark Rift** for **N64** or **Win 95** and get flesh scorching projectiles, hyper quick ten hit combos, blazing frame rates and some very unpleasant surprises for the competition.

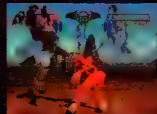
NINTENDO⁶⁴



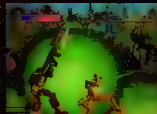
N64



N64



N64



N64

PC-CD ROM



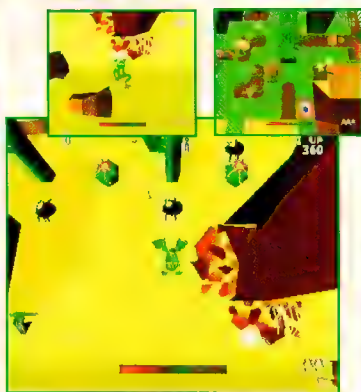
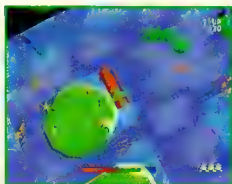
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PLAYSTATION



FROGGER

Ummm...Tastes Just Like Chicken

It's a safe bet that any game that was good in the past will make its way back to the gaming spotlight in a bright, new incarnation of some sort. Enter Frogger, the classic arcade game of the early '80s featuring amazingly simple gameplay, a straightforward objective and a cute little frog as well.

Back then, all players had to do was maneuver their frog across several gauntlets including a log-jammed river and a busy street without falling in the water or getting crushed by a car. Timing your jump and looking ahead for the next obstacle to avoid were the only things to remember. Later, the game was ported over to the Atari and Commodore platforms (where it enjoyed a long, happy life with several sequels in tow as well).

Striking the perfect balance of classic retro gameplay and modern graphic and level construction was Hasbro Interactive's

top priority. To facilitate this, the new-and-improved Frogger features 3-D polygonal graphics, an on-demand rotating game view, a lot of fast gameplay and enough levels to keep any gamer busy for a long time (10 worlds with over 50 levels in all).

While the basic premise of the game is the same (along with the classic overhead perspective), many new scenarios and enemies have been added to the mix. Players will be challenged by levels that take place in the clouds, in sewers and even in the desert where wild buffaloes threaten to stomp you into the brittle earth.

Take a hop into a yard littered with wayward lawnmowers approaching from every possible direction. Take cover in a corner for a moment and then quickly move to the next safe haven before you're pureed by an unforgiving mower blade. Still, other levels depart from the usual flat, horizontal or vertical travel and let you explore in a 360-degree radius, complete

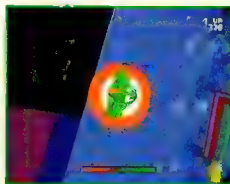


This game is void of any real violence. The frog dies but no blood.

with the illusion of 3-D depth and even the ability to hop a ride on a bird's back to shorten up the level.

New environments were not the only thing added to this incarnation of Frogger. Cool new moves like The Super Jump, Power Croak and the always-useful Heat-seeking Tongue were all added to help you collect bonus points on the levels. The Power Jump is especially useful in situations where multiple obstacles crowd your immediate path. The Heat-seeking tongue is useful for grabbing insects along the way for added points and power-ups while your Power Croak sends out a signal for all the baby frogs to respond to should they be in the area. Depending on how faint or loud their responding cry is lets you know where you can find them. Once found, rescue them for extra points.

With the gaming world going nuts for new release retro games,



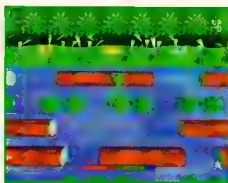
Sporting a whole new polygonal look, this Frogger is very modern.

Frogger will most likely find an eager audience of old and new school gamers ready for the modern Frogger experience. For the hopelessly nostalgic, it's rumored that the first Frogger in original form will be hidden within the game. As it is now, the first four levels of the new Frogger are from the original game only spruced up with modern graphics.

Nostalgic or not, Frogger's proven success should make for an entertaining next-generation game for any age gamer, and those who just like frogs. ■



Easy play makes this one perfect for non-gamers or grandparents.



It's a simple game but most of the classic arcade greats are.

PUBLISHER	Hasbro Interactive
DEVELOPER	Millenium
THEME	Retro Arcade
PLAYERS	1-4
% COMPLETE	50%
RELEASE DATE	October
ALSO ON	None

YOU'RE NEXT.



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EPIC SPACE CONFLICT



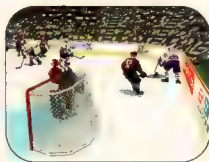
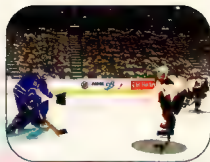
SUPER NINTENDO
GAMEPLAYERS

SEGA GENESIS

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SURE,
YOU CAN BLINK.
BETWEEN PERIODS.



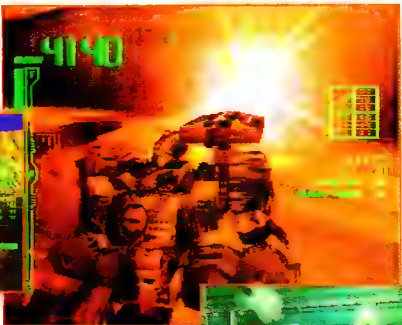
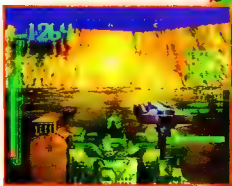
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PLAYSTATION



The intro is action-packed but leaves you wanting more robots.

Armored CORE

Some Hardcore Mechanized Action

What's up with the fascination with mechs lately? It's no surprise really, considering we're talking about hulking robots with cool armor and huge weapons that can take out buildings in one shot—there are a few things cooler.

The mission-based, Virtua On-style action game allows players to assemble a mech from scratch. By choosing various grades of body parts, players can take care of the enemy in no time flat. Of course, the process isn't as easy as it sounds for more than one reason.

First, players must accept contacts from corporations and then finish missions to increase their available moneys. At first, as one would think, the upgrades are fairly inexpensive. Once the missions start getting a little tricky though, and new weapons are necessary to beat them, things change. A new set of limbs or an enhanced cannon



may have a price tag that's a bit much. Because in Armored Core, they don't take kindly to wimpy mechs, and they don't take American Express...or any other credit card for that matter—just cold, hard cash.

The missions take players on a variety of different runs. Everything from guarding aircraft to destroying organisms that have taken over a city await the gamer. Don't look for dinky level sizes either (although some scenarios have you on a smaller playing field than others). Some missions take you deep underground while players

sit there wondering if the mission is actually going to end. To beat all these different missions, it will take lots of skill, and the ability to outmaneuver the enemy.

The control was an issue while playing the first mission, but like any game with complex control, a few missions remedy this and players become masters of their Armored Core. The type of Armored Core you have also affects control (i.e., one with humanoid legs will be faster than one with metal crab-like legs).

Since it's similar to Virtua-On, you may be wondering if Armored Core has some of the things that are so necessary in a mech-on-mech action title (namely two-player split-screen action) and yes, Armored Core features that. There is the standard Split-screen Mode, but there's also a Link Cable Option (for those of you with two TVs, two PlayStations and two copies of Armored Core).

Armored Core also has a garage and shop for upgrading your mech and an "e-mail" system so you can get readouts from your various clients. ■

Gamer's EDGE

So what's an AC

That's right! Not only does Armored Core feature cool mechs, the game also allows players to keep cool with air-conditioning. Actually AC stands for Armored Core (in case you didn't already guess). The Armored Core in the game is the chest sections of the mech, the "core" of the robot where the guts lay. But that's not the only thing that makes up the whole robot. Players can buy and fix every part of the body from arms to legs and everything in between (including weapons of course) as long as they have enough green saved up from completing missions.



Lock-on and fire to take out the competition in Two-player Mode.



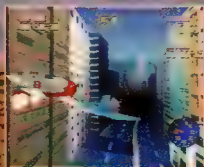
Armored Core can be scary when red ambient lighting is cast.

PUBLISHER	SCEA
DEVELOPER	From Software
THEME	Action
PLAYERS	1 or 2
% COMPLETE	75%
RELEASE DATE	October
ALSO ON	None

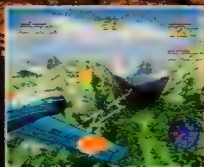


BRAVO AIR RACE

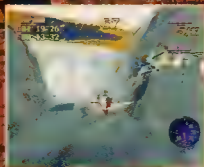
Anyone can race on the ground.



10° hat planes



3D courses



No roads anywhere



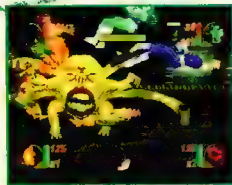
THQ

www.thq.com

Arriving in September



PLAYSTATION



Hey—what's the Hulk doin' here?
He's just one of several guest stars.



Sometimes even the background
will attack you. Just keep moving!

FANTASTIC FOUR

Dare We Say, 'It's Clobberin' Time?'

They may not be as cool, edgy or supernaturally hip as the X-Men, but the Fantastic Four—Marvel Comics' elder statesmen of the do-gooder superpalas crowd—have surely battled enough baddies in the past 45 years to earn starring roles in their own game, right? Acclaim thinks so, and they're giving the cosmic-ray-enhanced heroes the same treatment they've given Batman in his numerous console outings. In other words, Fantastic Four is a side-scrolling, Final Fight-esque adventure, with all the visual pizzazz of Acclaim's ultraflashy Batman Forever—except set in a polygonal universe.

The game lets you guide any one of the five most famous faces in the Fantastic Four family. You get the brainy, stretchy leader Mr. Fantastic; the brawny rockman The Thing; the force field-wielding Invisible

Woman; the head-to-toe hotfoot Human Torch; and fair-weather team member She Hulk. Each character has at least four special moves, usually combinations of shoulder buttons and taps on the D-pad. Mr. Fantastic, for instance, molds his rubbery bod into a 10-ton weight and drops on baddies when you hold R2 and double tap upward. Other specials include Torch's fireballs and The Thing's floor-rippling Foot Stomp. Some special moves, and all blocks, drain your hero's supply of Force Power, which you fill by collecting power-ups.

Your character can also pick up and toss enemies and objects, including cars. This tactic is especially useful when you're battling Bosses, most of which can't be injured by run-of-the-mill punches and kicks.

Up to four players may join in the game if you own a Multitap. Each controls a different team member, and you may switch between unused members in

mid-game. But if no fellow humans are available, you can have the computer control as many as three teammates (this option makes the game both easier and confusing, since the screen becomes cluttered with characters). You and a friend can also duke it out in Training Mode, which lets you practice moves in one-on-one bouts.

The game is divided into five episodes, each culminating in a confrontation with an infamous enemy from the comic book (Dr. Doom being the final Boss). Although the heroes and enemies are all sprite-based, the environments—from the streets of New York to the sunken world of Atlantis—are almost entirely polygonal, and your characters can wander into and out of the background and behind distant structures. But that's far from being the game's most impressive visual effect. With all its exploding vehicles, gigantic Bosses and explosive special moves, Fantastic Four is about as flashy as a game can get. ■

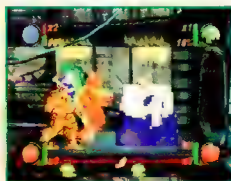
Gamer's EDGE

No Cheese, Please

Just when you thought it was safe to use the same lame moves over and over again in your side-scrolling adventures, Acclaim has gone and added a skill rating to Fantastic Four. Perform the same move too many times and a block of cheese appears next to your life gauge, showing you and everyone else just how lazy a player you are. But, if you come out swinging with a wide variety of punches, kicks, throws and special moves, you're rewarded with a special Thumbs-up icon. Although neither icon affects your score, having a block of cheese next to your health for too long could make you the laughing stock of a multiplayer game.

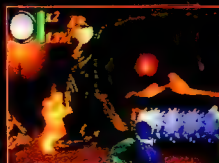


The polygonal environments let you wander way into the background.



Mr. Fantastic's best trick is his impersonation of a 10-ton weight.

PUBLISHER	Acclaim
DEVELOPER	Probe
THEME	Action
PLAYERS	1-4
% COMPLETE	90%
RELEASE DATE	September
ALSO ON	None



Let's See Your Joystick Do This!

Finally, there's violence on T.V. worth getting excited about. That's because NAKI's new Red Sight Laser Target System gives you total shooting control. Blow away enemies cowering behind obstacles, pick out terrorists without killing hostages—any time the situation demands pinpoint accuracy, you've gotta power up the Red Sight Laser. There's simply no alternative.

- Combine special Features like Auto Fire, Auto Reload, and Semi Auto Fire in any way you like.
- The Red Sight Laser Target System works with shooting games for PlayStation, N64, and Saturn.



Red Sight Laser Target System shown with Lunar Gun for Sony PlayStation (attaches to any NAKI Lunar Gun).



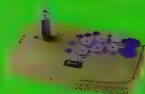
NAKI Lunar Guns are lightweight, durable, and available for all platforms.

NAKI

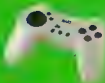
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Wireless Pro Controller



Pro Fighter 8



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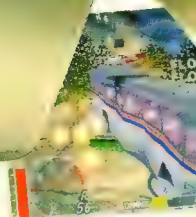
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You'll cross over more than a few double yellow lines in this driving game of mass destruction. With limited time to reach your objective, you won't be waiting for any lights to turn green. Whoops! You forgot to knock before pummeling through a neighbor's living room window. Tact never was your strong suit.

Your weapon is your wheels. And, if you're good, real good, you'll get to drive up to 22 of 'em. Like a limo, a badass pickup, a formula one racer, hell, even a tank if your hot-wiring skills are up to snuff.

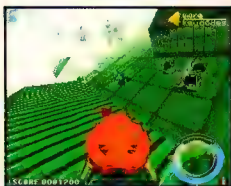
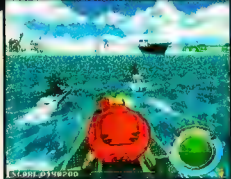
Don't expect any citizen-of-the-month award. Expect spine-tingling action, hair-raising crashes and the never-seen-before track cam view.



ASCII
ENTERTAINMENT

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PLAYSTATION

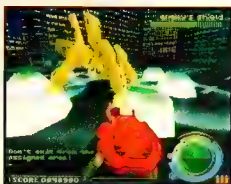


GHOST IN THE SHELL

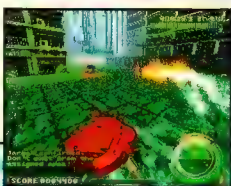
There's A Ghost In Your PlayStation

Based on the highly successful Japanese anime by Mamoru Oshii (as well as the manga which is published in the U.S. by Dark Horse comics), *Ghost in the Shell* is the latest movie-to-game translation to grace the home gaming scene.

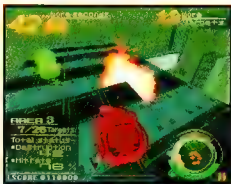
Developed by Exact, the company responsible for Sony's Jumping Flash! games, *Ghost in the Shell* (the game) takes place in the not-too-distant future, where technology has run wild and man and machine have essentially become one. You play the role of a young female cyborg cod named Motoko Kusanagi, who pilots a miniature mechanized tank (known as a Fuchokochi) with her cybernetic consciousness. If you've seen the movie you'll know what we're talking about; if not, we recommend renting it.



There are 12 stages in *Ghost in the Shell*, broken up with anime cut scenes and computer-rendered mission-briefing scenes (just like in the movie). Speaking of anime, there's over 10 minutes



of entirely new (and except on-ally high-quality) animation that wasn't present in the movie. And once you've seen a particular scene, you can rewatch it at any time with the game's Movie Replay option.



The Training Mode will allow you to get used to your mech's controls.

Gameplay is sort of a cross between *Doom* and *Epidemic*, but with much more of an exploratory element to play. Your mech can perform all the basic functions—forward and backward movement, left and right strafing and so on, but it can also climb walls and even walk on ceilings (like a spider). Weapons are somewhat limited—you've got just a machine gun, homing missiles and grenades—but you do have an infinite amount of the first two, so twitch-shooting fans need not worry (grenades, unfortunately, are limited and must be restocked). Analog control is supported as well, although the vibrating feature (which works surprisingly well with the Japanese version of this game) will not be present in the U.S. one.

There are two separate camera angles you can choose from during play (inside and outside), and when the action gets intense, the game will automatically switch over to the first-person view so as



Ten minutes of original animation were produced just for this game.

not to hinder your viewpoint from behind the mech (a nice touch). There's even a Training Mode for you to get accustomed to controlling your mech, and depending on how well you do in training (you get ranked), you'll get to view a cute animation sequence afterward.

The version being previewed is still completely in Japanese, so there's no telling how the voice acting will be, but T*HQ has assured us that the final release will feature the voices of the actors and actresses who did the voice-overs for the movie. ■



PUBLISHER	T*HQ
DEVELOPER	CEJ
THEME	Action
PLAYERS	1
% COMPLETE	90%
RELEASE DATE	October
ALSO ON	None

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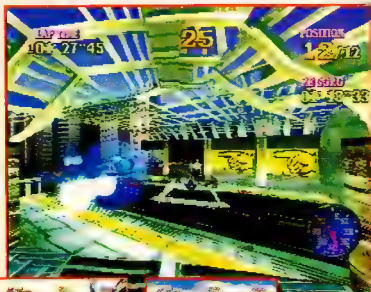
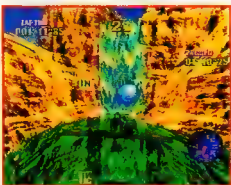
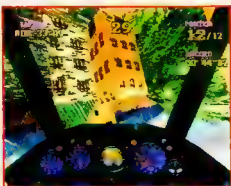
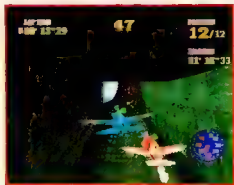
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PLAYSTATION



Bravo AIR RACE

It's Gonna Be A Rough Flight

More than one EGM staffer took a gander at the zigging and zagging planes of Bravo Air Race and asked, "Why don't they just fly higher in the sky, above all those buildings and trees and stuff?" Well, cuz Bravo Air Race is a racing game, and zipping safely above each course is, like, cheating, you know?

Actually, this is the first racing game to feature airplanes. And you don't have to worry about shooting down opponents or dodging enemy fire like in most other flying (and many racing) titles. Bravo Air Race's planes aren't equipped with weapons; the only power-ups you'll find are turbo boosts and a few other goodies. The emphasis in this analog-compatible racer is on ultrafast racing and split-second maneuvering.

Like in the WipeOut games, the tracks in Bravo Air Race are as much an enemy as the other

racers. There are four courses in all: one that winds through mountains and villages, another set above city streets, one that corkscrews through frozen Alpine terrain and a final track that's set in a canyon. All the courses are crammed with sharp turns, drops and winding tunnels, as well as occasional shortcuts.

And all of them whiz by at screaming speeds. Take a turn too wide and you'll crash into a building or canyon wall, losing valuable time and probably the entire race. Fly too high and you'll get slapped with a Course Out penalty, which forces you to return to the track at agonizingly slow speeds. Newbie pilots can switch on an autopilot feature that makes tricky turns a little easier. You can also toggle guide markers that highlight the best route through each course. (Don't follow these markers blindly, however, since they sometimes lead you away from shortcuts.)

You may choose from 10 planes when you first start playing Bravo



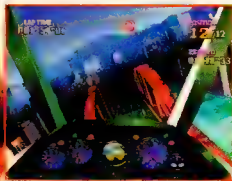
Air Race, with two hidden aircraft becoming available after you place first in the races. Several of the airplanes are vintage World War II fighters, such as the Mustang and Zero. Others are modern showplanes. Each supposedly offers true-to-life performance. Most of the fighters, for instance, are lightning quick, while the show planes are extremely maneuverable. Tapping the shoulder buttons makes each plane perform a stunt—although showing off anyplace other than in a straightaway seriously bumps up your risk of a crash.

Players can either fly in



Most shortcuts—like this gap in the skyscrapers—are dangerously tight.

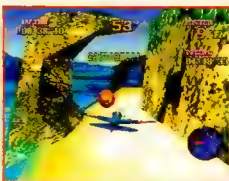
standard races against 12 other planes (who radio trash talk to you when you pass 'em) or practice in a Time Attack Mode. Better still, two players can race head-to-head in a Split-screen Mode. ■



Choose the Cockpit View if you like lookin' at dials and switches.



Some circuits branch off into dead ends. Don't wander too far.



As if the planes weren't fast enough, you also get speed boosts.



PUBLISHER	T.H.Q.
DEVELOPER	XING
THEME	Racing
PLAYERS	1 or 2
% COMPLETE	95%
RELEASE DATE	September
ALSO ON	None

VIDEO GAMES: PLAYSTATION											
Title	Release	Price	Title	Release	Price	Title	Release	Price	Title	Release	Price
Act 0: Gears & Bits	NOW	\$51	Cave Forces	NOW	\$49	King's Field 2	NOW	\$51	Play Storm	NOW	\$46
ASC: 1 Sphere 360	11/97	\$29	Darkstalkers 3	11/97	\$52	Legacy of Kain	NOW	\$50	PlayMan 2	NOW	\$52
Alien vs. Heartless	03/98	\$32	Death Keep	NOW	\$52	Lost Vikings 2	NOW	\$44	Rebel Assault 1/2	NOW	\$49
Alien vs. Predator	01/98	\$52	Death Trap Dungeon	NOW	\$50	Lost World	NOW	\$44	Resident Evil 2	01/98	\$52
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Sony (Re)playing)
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Midway (Adventure)
Release Date: NOW PSX \$46, N64 \$79

'BANJO KAZOOIE N64' Banjo, a booby goofy bear, and Kazooie, his Red Crested Breasted buddy, spring to life with cartoon-like animation. 16 different worlds and up to 24 different attacks and abilities.

Nintendo (Adventure)
Release Date: 11/97 N64 \$69

'DUKE NUKEM 3D' 9 emitter enemies to wage war against. 10 high tech weapons. 29 real time perspective levels. Non-restrictive character control allows 360 degree player mobility. Over 20 power-ups to collect, from night vision goggles to steroids.

Sega (Shooter)
Release Date: NOW SAT \$44

'WARCRAFT 2' Real-time action strategy game set in a medieval fantasy world. Play a total of 52 missions with over 90 customizable maps. Command multiple character types and defend your strongholds.

Electronic Arts (Strategy)
Release Date: NOW PSX \$44

'THE LOST WORLD: JURASSIC PARK' Take on the role of a compassologist, velociraptor, T-Rex, or a couple of humans as you make your way through 24 different environments and battle the carnivorous inhabitants of the T-Rex World.

Sega (Adventure)
Release Date: NOW SAT \$44

'MAGIC KNIGHT REAVER' Three Japanese schoolboys must save a Princess to restore peace to the land. Breathtaking animation with over 90 minutes of audio. When you talk to characters in the game, they reply!

Working Designs (Re)playing)
Release Date: NOW SAT \$52

'SAMURAI SWORDS' Wage war in the tradition of the valiant samurai warrior! Collect income as a reward for provincial conquest. Form a militia, bond of loyalty with an enemy warrior to further your cause.

Millon Bradley (Board Game)
Release Date: NOW BG \$35

'MAGIC THE GATHERING 5th Edition' This deck contains 60 tradable game cards, randomly assorted, plus a rule book. Each player must draw a card. This deck may be enhanced with more cards sold in booster packs.

Wizards of the Coast (Card Game)
Release Date: NOW CG \$7

'CONSPIRACY X' In a world of dark secrets, the only certainty is nothing is what it seems. The president may not be human. The sign carrying paranoid on the street railing mind control satellites may be right.

New Millennium (Pen/Paper Re)playing)
Release Date: NOW RPG \$20



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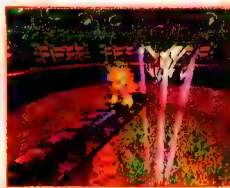
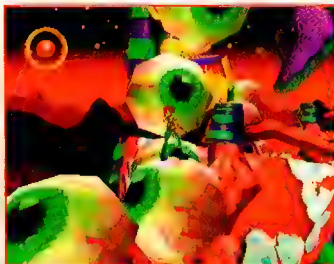
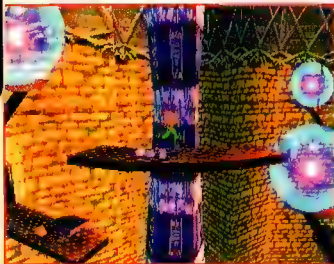


How do you spot a Sonic fanatic? Just look for the gold rings. Sonic Jam for Sega Saturn combines the 4 best-selling Sonic games in new 32-Bit brilliance on one stellar CD. Plus you can cruise the 3D Sonic Museum, packed with Sonic memorabilia. So get Sonic Jam. Unless you've got holes in your head. Uh, bad example.

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PLAYSTATION



Later on in the game, you'll be able to pilot a tremendous mech robot.

PANDEMONIUM 2

Get Ready For More "2 1/2-D" Action

Crystal Dynamics is currently putting the finishing touches on the sequel to last year's hit "2 1/2-D" action-platformer for the PlayStation, *Pandemonium 2*. While the gameplay is more or less true to the original, the overall look and feel of the game has changed quite a bit.

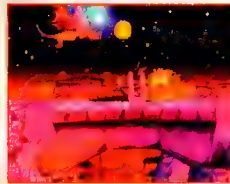
Pandemonium 2 takes place in the same world as the first game, but it's not entirely obvious at first glance. Gone are the shiny, happy graphics of the original, replaced with darker, more trippy psychedelic visuals. The two main

characters, Nikki and Fargus, have undergone changes as well—Fargus simply looks a bit older (and more psychotic), while Nikki's been given a complete makeover—in every area imaginable (make of that what you will).

There are a total of 19 stages in *Pandemonium 2*, not including hidden and/or bonus areas. Like the original, gameplay is essentially 2-D side-scrolling fare with a freestyle 3-D camera that creates the illusion of a 3-D world (without sacrificing control). Before each stage you choose to play as either Nikki or Fargus; each has unique abilities that can help (or hinder)



Rope climbing is an essential skill throughout the many stages of P2.



Pandemonium 2's Bosses are huge, as evidenced by this flying dragon.

your progress, depending on which stage you're on. Fargus can use his tumble attack from the original *Pandemonium*! but now he can throw Sid (his head-on-a-staff sidekick) and direct him toward coins and treasures that may have been otherwise unreachable. His jump has been improved a bit as well. Nikki on the other hand is more or less the same as she was (with her ever-useful double jump), but her experience with magic has improved quite a bit. Both characters share some new abilities: They can climb ropes, travel hand-over-hand underneath certain areas and most importantly, they can pull themselves up ledges (Lara Croft-style). This adds a lot to the gameplay, and makes for more interesting stage layouts than those found in the first game.

There's a certain puzzle element found in many stages as well. For example, you might have to pull a switch in one room to open up a path in

another. Techniques like this are commonplace in P2, and they require you to use your head as well as your thumbs (the tell-tale sign of a good platformer). The camera work is more aggressive too, and there are more areas that require lightning-fast reflexes to get by. In a nutshell, it won't be easy.

Pandemonium 2 should be on store shelves in the middle of October (the version previewed was about 75 percent complete), so be sure to check back next month for the Review Crew's opinions of the final game. ■

Gamer's EDGE

Nikki, Fargus and Sid, *Pandemonium*'s trio of main characters have undergone a pretty severe facelift (particularly Nikki, who looks like an

entirely different person in all ways but one, err two...) in *Pandemonium 2*. Check out these before and after shots to see what we mean.



First, the trio as seen in the original *Pandemonium*!...



...and then the three after they received their makeovers.

PUBLISHER	Crystal Dynamics
DEVELOPER	Crystal Dynamics
THEME	Action
PLAYERS	1
% COMPLETE	75%
RELEASE DATE	October
ALSO ON	None

IAN LIVINGSTONE'S

DEATHTRAP

Dungeon



EIDOS

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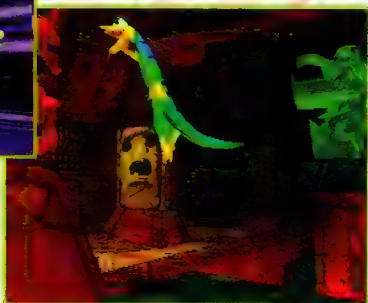
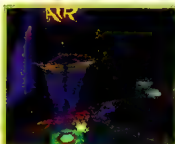
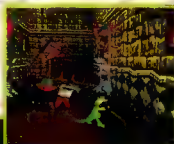
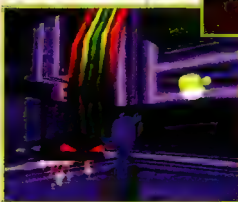
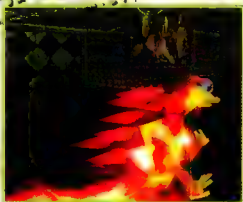


CORE

EIDOS
INTERACTIVE
You've been warned.

Starring Mace Daniels, Hawk Manson, Alana McKendrick and Ben "Smasher" Jackson.

PLAYSTATION



GEX: ENTER THE GECKO

Mario did it. So did Bubsy. We expect Sonic will do it soon, too. Now, Gex is joining the more-or-less elite group of side-scrolling mascot characters that entered the world of free-roaming 3-D. The smart-ass gecko, previously on the 3DO, PlayStation and Saturn, is going to make his newest appearance on the PlayStation only.

Gex is a TV-oholic. In his first adventure, he saved all of the world's TV programming from the evil Rez. Well, it seems Rez has knocked out the world's TV channels again. So Gex must go back into the Media Dimension to save television.

In the Media Dimension, you can find eight worlds, with two channels per world (for a total of 16 levels). Each world has a prominent theme attached to it. As Gex's claim to fame goes, the themes are all based on parodies of different areas of contemporary media, like cable TV and old movies. For example, one level

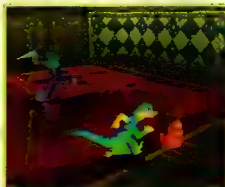


Copper-topped batteries make up the collectables in the circuit world.

makes fun of all the cheesy horror/slasher flicks we've seen in our lifetime. The other worlds make fun of kung-fu, science fiction, cartoons, spy films and more.

The backgrounds, enemies and icons all are representative of the theme of the day. In the circuit world (a very *Tron*-esque look at the inside of a computer), Gex must pick up copper-top batteries. In the prehistoric world, you may run into dangerous purple dinosaurs. In the spy level, you can expect to see Crystal Dynamics' version of Jaws, James Bond's archenemy.

Besides the parody and humor, *Enter the Gecko* is also distinguished from its competition by his unique ability to stick to walls. So while Croc and Mario are running around 3-D worlds, Gex will be busy climbing sideways and even upside down. This



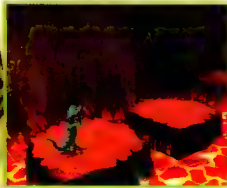
Hucky's body will continue to attack you until you squash the head.

leads to interesting gameplay and strategies, but unfortunately, Gex cannot do this whenever he wants. Only certain walls can be vertically scaled by the gecko.

Besides running and sticking to walls, Gex can use his tail to attack and his tongue to grab on to ledges. When he picks up certain power-ups, he'll have even more moves available. For example, Gex can eat certain fireflies that may give him a 360-degree tail attack or set him on

fire to engulf his enemies.

Although Mario and Sonic are tough acts to follow, Gex has little other competition. Now that he has gone 3-D (with analog controller support), and he's keeping his trademark humor (comedian Dana Gould is returning to do the voice acting again), he might have the right stuff to launch him to star status. ■



PUBLISHER	Crystal Dynamics
DEVELOPER	Crystal Dynamics
THEME	Action
PLAYERS	1
% COMPLETE	60%
RELEASE DATE	December
ALSO ON	None



SPORTS

MADDEN 64

Boom! The Madden bus makes a surprise stop at Nintendo

When EA signed a sweetheart deal to bring out a line of Nintendo 64 sports games months ago, they weren't messing around. Although Madden 64 was expected to arrive on the Nintendo 64 in the future, very few fathomed that it would hit shelves as soon as November. As the saying goes: The future is now.

As you might expect, Madden 64 is a completely 3-D game (unlike its 32-Bit counterparts). What you might not expect is that it doesn't come equipped with the NFL license that has become a mainstay of video football games (not to mention Madden games). The reason for this is that Acclaim secured exclusive rights to the NFL license for N64 football games for the remainder of the football season. The impact upon Madden 64 is not too harsh. All of the real players, stadiums and team colors will be correct, although team logos and their names will be left out. The Green Bay Packers, for instance, are listed as Green Bay—composed of Favre and associates—and will still play in picturesque Lambeau Field. But enough about these licensing technicalities.

Madden 64 is essentially the same as the PlayStation version, aside from its polygonal graphics.



These 3-D graphics certainly add an element of graphical pizzazz that has been absent from previous Madden offerings. At this point, the player animations are very fluid and run at a brisk frame rate. The attention to detail on the players is enormous. If you zoom up close to the players, their names can be seen on the backs of their jerseys, and facial features are visible behind their helmets.

Being built around the brains of the PlayStation's Madden 98 is a good thing, as it



Madden 64 looks very impressive as EA Sports' first attempt at a football game for the Nintendo 64.

possesses the smartest AI found in a console football game. This is presumably how the game was created so quickly. The N64 cartridge format seems to be non-limiting, as Madden 64 contains all of the same in-depth features such as the creating, signing and trading of players in addition to fantasy drafts and custom season options.

With the surprise announcement of Madden 64, one can only wonder what else EA might have up their sleeve for Nintendo owners.



The complex, polygonal player models allow for highly detailed instant replays. Notice how the camera can be tilted to scan the line of scrimmage.

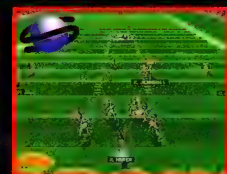
SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
	November
PUBLISHER	THEME
EA	Football
PLAYERS	SIZE
1-4	N/A
% COMPLETE	
	60%



Obviously, the N64 version of Madden is unique in that it's 3-D. Also different are the more colorful playcall screens, better end-zone celebrations and verbal taunts.



The PlayStation version has all of the extra Madden video clips during the Season Mode that the N64 does not. Also, it plays a bit faster than the polygonal N64 version.



The Saturn version is almost identical to the PlayStation version of Madden. The full-motion video is a little grainier and is cropped smaller, but who cares, it's FMV.

The same game, different results. To the laymen, the '98 versions of Madden football are identical. Of course, the Nintendo version has some snazzy graphics, but the differences between games are sometimes subtle. Because of the polygons, Madden 64 will play close to, but not nearly as fast as the 32-Bit, sprite-based versions. The N64 version does have a first-person view available called the "Helmet Cam" which is pretty interesting to play with but not really too practical. Whichever version you get, you really can't go wrong.

NHL 98

EA Sports' new hockey simulation brings high-resolution hockey to the PlayStation

EA's latest addition to the hugely successful NHL series is nearing completion, and should be ready for release on the PlayStation and Saturn this October. It'll be released amidst stiff competition from Sony, Virgin and Acclaim (with FaceOff '98, Powerplay '98 and Breakaway '98 respectively).

Similar to last year's game, NHL 98 will feature fully polygonal motion-captured players, providing ultrasmooth gameplay. Not so similar to last year's game, however, is that—so far—the game actually moves quite quickly (last year's looked great, but played a bit sluggishly due to

the polygons). That was probably the only fault of last year's version (besides the annoying pre- and post-game commentary by John Davidson), so EA's refinement of their polygonal engine could make a huge difference this year.

Other additions to this year's game include play-by-play commentary by Jim Hughson and Daryl "The Razor" Reaugh, smarter AI than last year's version (although it was pretty good already) and, best of all, a new International Tournament Mode that includes the ability to play as any of 14 international teams (including, of course, good ol' Team USA). You can create



Because of its new, hi-res graphics, NHL 98 looks better than ever before (and more like the PC ver.)

and customize your own tournaments as well.

Despite the fact that there are now three main competitors vying for the title of hockey king, EA still has the most experience and, ultimately, the most popular name. The improved game engine and extra options could be what pushes NHL 98 over the top.



SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
	October
	THEME
	Hockey
PUBLISHER	SIZE
EA	CD-ROM
PLAYERS	% COMPLETE
1-8	50%

JIMMY JOHNSON'S VR FOOTBALL '98

Coach Johnson finds new football fields to conquer

The game now known as Jimmy Johnson's VR Football '98 has a past almost as interesting as the coach himself. Sega initially had rights to the original football game engine. It then was sold to Konami and finally to Interplay where it has found a home under the VR Sports label. It seems like a journey almost as long as the road to the Super Bowl itself.

All background information aside, Jimmy Johnson's Football has long been known (as it has been passed around) as "that console football game with the play editor." Indeed, no other console football game in recent memory has had a play editor, and it is good to see some game developers making an effort to create one. So far, the editor is easy to use, and seems pretty

good. One of the true tests over time will be to see if unstoppable "money plays" can be created through the use of the editor.

The game itself is a hybrid of 2-D and 3-D graphics, much like the 32-Bit Madden games. The fields are completely 3-D, enabling players to use the L and R buttons to move the field camera and zoom in and out during gameplay. Another interesting 3-D element is an optional passing aide which shows the trajectory of the ball, through the use of a transparent blue arc. This feature seems best used solely as a learning tool because it enables your opponents (in Multiplayer Mode) to immediately see where the ball is headed.

In addition to the aforementioned features, Jimmy Johnson carries all he requisite NFL




The optional pass interface is rather unique as it defines the trajectory of the ball while in flight.

licenses, Player Creation Modes and trades. There is also some rather *perky* full-motion-video advice from Jimmy himself.

With tough competition (such as GameDay and Madden) ahead, Interplay is putting a lot of faith in Coach Johnson's winning tradition to keep them ahead of the pack this season.



SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
	October
	THEME
	Football
PUBLISHER	SIZE
Interplay	CD-ROM
PLAYERS	% COMPLETE
1-8	85%

PGA TOUR 98

TEAM EGM SPORTS

Although it looks similar to EA's past 32-Bit golf games, PGA Tour 98 is showing strong signs of substantial improvement over its predecessor (unlike the somewhat disappointing PGA Tour 97).

PGA Tour 98 has undergone a mild facelift in the form of better scenery and crisper graphics, making the golf courses more lively and realistic. There are plenty of different-looking trees, golf cart paths and buildings, giving each course unique character and authenticity.

One of PGA Tour 98's most simple, improved features is also one that I consider to be very important. A huge problem with console golf games in the last few years is the large number of courses included with each one. Most only come with a scant two or three, aren't real or licensed. To my pleasure, PGA Tour 98 is coming equipped with five different golf courses, all fully licensed.

When you play and compete on these courses with 14 of the licensed PGA Tour Pro players, the game really starts to feel like you're playing in a professional tournament.

EA has always been known for the number of options provided in their sports games, and this one continues with the tradition. Eight game modes are included (three new ones including a golf skills competition), and it's darn hard to come up with eight Play Modes for a golf game. There are plenty of other nifty features such as a "Hole Overview Analyzer" that provides audio commentary and tips on each hole.


With a very impressive set of options, courses and licenses, PGA Tour 98 is looking very strong. The only thing not provided is a course editor. I guess they need something for the '99 edition.



The graphics in PGA Tour 98 are looking pretty good. Notice the picture-in-picture view on the left.



If there's one thing you don't have to worry about in an EA game, it's options. Finally, they also provide plenty of golf courses. Yay!

SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
	October
	THEME
	IGN!
PUBLISHER	SIZE
EA	1-4
PLAYERS	% COMPLETE
1-4	60%

HARDWOOD HEROES

Midway embraces realism and slows down the pace

The king of the fast-paced, outrageous basketball sims (NBA Hang Time) has decided to slow down the pace to mortal speeds with their newest, realistic basketball game: Hardwood Heroes.

Going for the realistic look and feel rather than the over-the-top antics of NBA Hang Time, Hardwood Heroes will feature many subtle player animations not found in other basketball games. With the help of fluid-moving polygonal players, Midway hopes the new movements will give their game the graphical edge in the crowded basketball sim market. The main attraction will be side-to-side and back movements in defense and offense. Should they pull it off successfully, these maneuvers will offer an eye-catching level of graphical realism for a basketball sim. Also making its mark will be

individual rebounding and blocking abilities based on the height and skill of the actual players. In other words, you won't find shorter players like Steve Kerr shooting over the big men like Malone or Olajuwon. Also unique to the game will be signature moves for some of the more well-known players along with their own special celebration movements.

For the more industrious lads, there will be a Practice Mode for sharpening skills in shooting, passing, dribbling and, everybody's favorite, the slam dunk competition.

With multitap support giving it up to five-on-five play ability, this may be the game that finally gets the crew to come over to your crib for the evening.

The game will be fully licensed by the NBA with all the




goodies, logos, stadiums, uniforms, etc.

Only time will tell if this game is able to stand out in the impressive field of 32-Bit basketball games.



The players are introduced in showtime fashion before each game. You'll probably abort it after seeing it once, though (left).



SYSTEM	RELEASE DATE
	October
	THEME
	Midway
PUBLISHER	SIZE
Midway	1-8
PLAYERS	% COMPLETE
1-8	60%



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VOLUME 1 ISSUE 1

PlayStation

FORMERLY P.S.X. Magazine

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DEMO DISC

playable demos:

PaRappa the Rapper
Ace Combat 2
Intelligent Qube
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non-playable demos:

Tomb Raider 2
NFL GameDay '98

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Current Favorites:

Kraig Kujawa - Madden NFL 98 • NFL GameDay 98
Dean Hager - NFL GameDay 98 • Moto Racer GP

Sporting Game Reviews

MADDEN NFL 98 • PLAYSTATION • EA

Kraig Kujawa

Madden NFL 98 doesn't have the flashiest graphics, but it does have rock-solid gameplay. Though not perfect, Madden 98 is the most realistic football game I've played. I can usually destroy the computer in football games after days, but not with this gem of a game. The computer AI is very smart, and doesn't cheat to get the job done. I still haven't found a "money play," which makes the multiplayer games all the more challenging. There are loads of features, including a fantasy draft that just make Madden 98 the best PlayStation football game.



To borrow from the *Six Million Dollar Man*, Madden 98 is smarter, stronger, better than before. While it missed the polygon boat (at least for the PS version), it more than makes up for it with its stellar AI. Time and time again, our scores stayed within the 14-21 point range, a tell-tale sign a football game is good. Also, the lack of money plays or cheap maneuvers convinced us Madden 98's overhauled game engine is purrrrr like a kitten. Bad things? It's not polygonal and the tackle animations are a bit weak—live with it.

Dean Hager

NFL GAMEDAY 98 • PLAYSTATION • SCEA

Kraig Kujawa

Graphically, NFL GameDay 98 is revolutionary. Many didn't think that a polygonal football game could be done this well on a PS, but Sony pulled it off. The gameplay is vintage GameDay—you'll be able to pick up this year's version quickly even though the game is fully 3-D. There are a lot of sweet, new moves made possible by the polygonal graphics. The AI in the game is pretty good, and it plays realistically, although I've found a few plays that work a little too well. Regardless, you can't go wrong with Sony's stunning, 3-D football game.



GameDay 98 has set itself apart from the pack in a big way this year, thanks to its awesome polygonal transformation. If you're worrying about slowdown, relax. GameDay 98 is just as fast if not faster than last year. While some of the moves remain the same, the new tackling, tightroping and catching animations are great additions. The AI is also a bit better as well. While Madden 98's AI may be a bit more refined, NFL GameDay 98 wins out slightly due to its superior look and general appeal as an exciting football game to play.

Dean Hager

NCAA FOOTBALL 98 • PLAYSTATION • EA

Kraig Kujawa

NCAA Football is using a revamped Madden 97 engine and it shows. Although the game is exciting, the grainy graphics are average and the AI is loaded with glaring weaknesses. For example, too many receivers are always open, and it's pretty easy to run back kicks and punts (if you know the right moves). There are some cool things such as pitching the ball and having playbooks tailored to many of the college teams that make the game fun. NCAA 98 is an above-average football game, but be prepared to run up some really high scores.



College football is an acquired taste for most, but for those of you who love Madden football, NCAA is a must. Gameplay is similar to Madden 97 (they use the same engine) with most of the same controls and options. Unfortunately, some of the same AI bugs are there as well. The differences are in the cleaner, easier-to-understand play interface and the enormous amount of plays available in NCAA. The game is a bit grainier than the new Madden 98 and there are some "money plays," but it's still a fun game to play.

Dean Hager

NHL POWERPLAY '98 • PLAYSTATION • VIRGIN

Kraig Kujawa

There's a lot to like about NHL Powerplay '98. The game is very realistic, and the computer AI is smart and will put up a good fight. The 3-D player graphics are detailed, but some of their animations are a little choppy. The gameplay is above average, but could stand to be faster with more responsive player control (a common problem in many polygonal sports games). Also, Virgin needs to work on the game presentation and atmosphere. Powerplay '98 is a good hockey simulation, but its gameplay problems might sour the overall experience.



Coming off the success of last year's edition, I expected '98 to be very good. What I got was a good game with a few drawbacks. I found myself constantly using the turbo in an attempt to speed up the action. Frame rate is a little slow with a bit of choppy animation. Occasionally, the puck is hard to follow but nothing too extreme. The stats are all good, but it doesn't matter if the gameplay isn't up to par. Powerplay '98 is a decent hockey sim, but with so much competition, it won't cut it to just be a good sim—it has to be great.

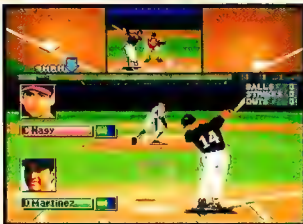
Dean Hager

Sporting Game Reviews

BOTTOM OF THE NINTH '97 • PLAYSTATION • KONAMI

Kraig Kujawa

I have mixed feelings about the '97 edition of BotN. At its core, the gameplay is pretty good. Unfortunately, almost everything accompanying the gameplay is cheesy or lacking in some way. The players animate well, but look rather shabby. There is no MLB team license (the players are included) and the stadiums have names like "Monster Dome." There are some cool features such as Scenario and Training Modes, but missing are things such as a Home Run Derby. BotN '97 is fun, but lacks the depth or atmosphere that is expected in a pro baseball game.



Bottom of the Ninth '97 has improved over last year's edition but is still just a little stale overall. OK, the look of the polygon players has improved, but they still appear robotic. Continuing on, the upper third of the screen still displays the bases and the pitcher view box which makes for a very crowded screen. On the positive side, gameplay is good and the game speed is fast as well (particularly the rate at which the pitches come at you). Hitting the ball is tough, as it should be, but not impossible. The Scenario Mode is cool as well.

Dean Hager

PORSCHE CHALLENGE • PLAYSTATION • SCEA

Kraig Kujawa

This is probably the most stylish, pinnacle racing game I've ever played. The graphics, attitude, music and the breed of car you drive contributes to the suave atmosphere of the game. This contributes to, but does not make a great game. Herein lies the problem. Porsche Challenge doesn't generate the excitement found in the top-notch racing titles. The car control is brutally realistic and the design of some of the tracks is pretty uninteresting. With great visuals and attitude, Porsche Challenge is no slouch, but it could use some refinement.



This is what Need for Speed II should have looked and played like had it been true to the original. In Porsche Challenge look forward to large, 3-D cars racing various rural tracks similar to how they would perform in true life. The realism aspect of the game was done well, but I soon got bored of only having the Booster to race with. Throw in all the different Porsches, speed up the frame rate and chuck the goofy characters and this would be a serious racing game. Porsche Challenge is a good, but limited, racing sim.

Dean Hager

GRAND TOUR RACING • PLAYSTATION • ACTIVISION

Kraig Kujawa

Activision's new racing game is an ambitious one that combines an incredible amount of racing styles, cars and tracks. With all of these types of play, it must have been difficult to refine each one. You can play with anything from sports cars to racing dune buggies in Egypt. Some of the racing classes are quite fun, but others in the Grand Tour are a little monotonous and the action is sparse. The in-game music is good, but some of the sounds can grate on your nerves. With so much depth, GTR has something for all, despite its rough edges.



Activision put a lot of effort into creating exotic tracks and locales, different styles of race and multiple routes and shortcuts. Now, did it all pay off? For the most part, yes. Certain tracks are better than others. For example, Scotland's Rally Race is very fast with good competition, while on others the combination of the droning "blender-like" motor sound and the long lengths of road with no sign of competition really does make it seem more like a tour than a race. In the end, the good elements outweigh the bad.

Dean Hager

VMX RACING • PLAYSTATION • PLAYMATES

Kraig Kujawa

This game left me speechless...in a really bad way. After playing so many beautiful and fun 3-D racing games on the PS, it was shocking to play this amateurish effort. Aside from the FMV intro and some of the music, there's plenty to find at fault with every aspect of this motorbike game. The graphics are poor, and move at a bad frame rate. Gameplay is simple, repetitive and annoying (especially the way your motorbike wrecks). Even though there are few motorcycle racing games on the market, it wouldn't be a good idea to pick up this sloppy title.



To its advantage, VMX Racing has managed to become the first 32-Bit moto-x for the PlayStation and while the game can grow on you, it has detractors. Narrow tracks cause a lot of congestion and subsequent slowdown (especially at the starting lines), running off the road even the slightest bit causes a wreck (with the same animations every time) and finally the speed burst doesn't seem to do anything other than rev the motor. Overall, the game has some good elements, but the aforementioned major flaws bring it down.

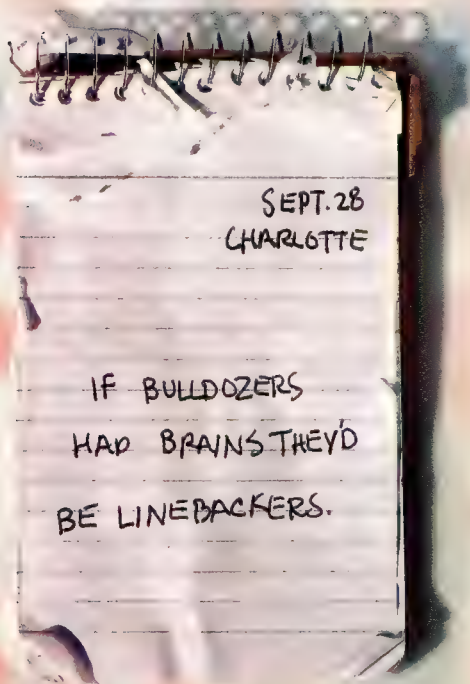
Dean Hager



SUPER NINTENDO
ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM

SEGA
GENESIS

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MADDEN
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EVERYBODY'S KUNG-FU FIGHTING

Dear *EGM*,

I think it's great that so many fighting games are available for fans to choose from, but I just don't understand how some of these games can make money for the developers. Why are some of these game companies taking such a big gamble, hoping their games will be adored by fighting game fans, when the market is completely saturated at this point?

Rich Klimson
rklimo@aol.com

Tekken, Mortal Kombat, Fatal Fury, Virtua Fighter, Street Fighter, etc....is it too much? Is the market saturated? Not according to consumers. Last year, gamers spent nearly \$150 million on 32-/64-Bit head-to-head fighting games. This makes up over 15 percent of the U.S.'s total domestic sales (compare that to 8.5 percent for adventure games or 1.7 percent for RPGs). In Japan, fighting games represent over 80 percent of video game sales. Translation: The genre is a modern-day gold rush. A lot of developers are hoping to create the next big thing, and who can blame them? Who knows what upcoming fighting game will join the elite ranks of the hits listed above?



People are buying them, so they'll keep on coming. Shown here is T'HO's VS. for the PS.

GOOD LETTERS DON'T GO TO HEAVEN

Dear *EGM*,

How in the h... do you keep up with all the letters sent in? Do you have speed readers or robotic people who do nothing but read letters? And how do you determine which letters are published, and which go to letters heaven?

Devin Jackson
Warrensville Hts., Ohio

It's a tough job. (How many of you feel that the letters editor deserves a raise? Let your voice be heard!!!!) Unfortunately, since we get literally thousands of e-mails and snail mails each month, thousands go unpublished (but we still read them all). All we can tell you is, please keep your letters short and to the point and please don't beg to get your letter printed. By the way, we like getting compliments, but they will NOT help get your letter printed (we usually edit those parts out anyway to save space). And don't forget: The editorial department (us) cannot answer any of your subscription questions! Please see the instructions at the beginning of the letters section for your subscription concerns.

MR. DEMANDING

Dear *EGM*,

I've heard that people play all sorts of games 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and they get paid for it. Is this true? If so, could you send me information on how I can do this? Also, could you start me out now by sending me four games with instructions (for the Super NES only) a month for me to play? I'll send them back with my opinions. And if I win Letter of the Month, could I have either \$30 by check or cash, or Ranma 1/2 for the Super NES?

Thomas Tran
Dickinson, Texas

Wow...no, no, no and no.

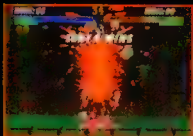
NO COMPLAINTS

Dear *EGM*,

I am one of the few people writing to *EGM*. NOT complaining about how bad the Review Crew rates games. Whenever I read *EGM*'s reviews, I can tell they are honest

TOP 5 GORIEST GAMES of ALL TIME

- 5 Resident Evil: DC
PlayStation
Capcom
- 4 Loaded
PlayStation/Saturn
Interplay
- 3 House of the Dead
Arcade
Sega
- 2 Splatterhouse
series
Multiplatform
Namco
- 1



Mortal Kombat
series
Multiplatform
Midway

Honorable Mentions: PO'ed, Die Hard Trilogy, Legacy of Kain, BloodStorm, Techno Cop, Time Killers, Doom series, RoboCop vs. Terminator (Genesis).

Letter of the MONTH

SPRINGIN' A LEAK

Dear EGM,

For what seemed to be like the better part of a year, all you had to do to win the "Letter of the Month" in the *EGM* letter column was write a letter complaining about censorship or some similar thing. One of these letters was some guy who was ticked off because in some version of *Primal Rage*, the fatality where you piss on your opponent was removed. Now I am not normally one to condone censorship (I love the gory games and movies as much as the next guy), but after reading this person's comment about *Primal Rage*, I began to ask some questions to myself about the way our society works. As I said, I have never condoned censorship of any kind in the past and probably never will. But do we really need to see someone urinating on someone else to have a good time? Normally, I think that the artist's vision should not be compromised at all: The finished product should be true to the artist's vision. But these people are not necessarily making this material for art: sex and violence sell, and they know it. I think much of the content in today's games and movies is intact for dollars more than artistic vision, with the creators not giving a damn about the effect it is having on children or society. I think about the recent movies I have rented, and as I ask myself the question, "Did you rent these because of a good story and craftsmanship, or did you rent them because of all the cool killing and action

in them?" I honestly don't know the answer. Look at a game like Mario 64. Did that game need violence to make it "Game of the Year?" Violence does not make a good game, but it sells. It creates an easy way out for game manufacturers who want to sell a ton of games. Should we be condoning this kind of thing? Should we be against censorship? Do we need to see a guy pissing on another guy to have a good time?

Ira Wells
Wells d@aol.net

Mr. Wells is right. We should not condone violence in video games (and letters on the topic of censorship do seem the topic of the day, every day...), but who are we to decide what is appropriate and what is not? What is trash and what is art? That's where the issue of censorship becomes a touchy subject. We don't believe anything a game developer creates should be changed. If Mr. Programmer wants to animate pissing dinos, then let him. Now, if we don't want children exposed to Jurassic urination, then it's up to everyone to: a) enforce the ratings system (by not letting underagers purchase mature-rated games) or b) be responsible parents and determine what is or isn't appropriate for their own children. We simply cannot and should not decide for everyone else what they can buy. What about all the legal-
aged adults who have every right to see dinosaurs relieve themselves on a vanquished foe? And no, we don't need to see

degrading or violent activity to really have fun. But if you think about it, we're talking about video games. It's no nightly news showing real-life death and destruction, nor is it cable TV showing nudity, sex, graphic violence, etc. It's a bunch of animated sprites and polygons put together by a few programmers with a goofy sense of humor. But Mr. Wells does have a very good point. Sometimes (actually, very often) companies throw controversial subjects into their games just to help sales and little else. Thankfully, gamers are all a bit more mature now and can see through a shallow game like that (In fact, just last month, we publically criticized Virgin's upcoming *S&M*, which from early looks, revolved solely around the ol' ultra-violence and little else). Hopefully over time, these controversial-just-to-be-controversial games should slowly be voted out by our well-spent gaming dollars.



Congratulations.
You win an
INTERACT
Control Pad for
the Saturn,
PlayStation or
Nintendo 64
(your choice).

[illegible]

and accurate. And I think it's dumb when people write in and complain when their favorite game gets a 6.0. They shouldn't complain! A 6.0 means their game is above average, according to the Review Crew.

Danner Banks
Everett, WA

Actually, widget tons of letters complimenting our reviews—way, way more than the handful of letters complaining about them. We just don't bother printing any because we don't feel a need to boost our own egos. But we wanted to print Mr. Banks' letter because we thought it was a good reminder to everyone that our rating scale is NOT the same as a school's grading scale. A 5.0 is middle of the line average in our books (where a 5.0 would be failing in school). And don't forget, a 7.0 is a fairly decent score in *EGM* (instead of an average "C" grade on an educational scale).

Dear EGM,

Your review crew seems to be constantly criticized for their so-called biased reviews. I'm just glad that there is a mag out there that doesn't give perfect reviews to every hyped or pretty game. Thanks for being #1

Ryan Welch
Dend33@aol.com

Dear EGM,

I admit that *EGM's* reviews are quite critical, but the Review Crew is harsh toward *all* games equally. But you know what? That's why I listen to *EGM* and choose them over all the other magazines. *EGM* is the only mag who has the balls to say what sucks...sucks.

Jason Han
Honolulu, HI

OK, so sue us. Since we're not afraid of printing negative letters from people who

disagree with us, we figured we can toot our own horns and print a nice letter once in a while!

MANTASTIC BODIES

Dear *EGM*,

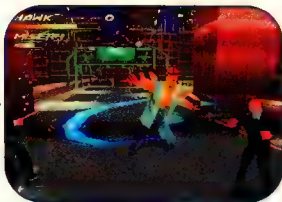
I've read about 9,000 letters addressing the subject of females being portrayed in a sexist manner in video games. These letters are stating how video game females are always perfect little Barbies with 100-pound bodies and long legs, and how it's so insulting that the female gender is being represented like this. Well here's a new thought for all your little craniums: The guys are portrayed in basically the same way! Akira, Ryu, Liu Kang, Guile, Shao Khan, Wolf and Sagat are all muscle-bound strong beast! People complain about how Sheeva is almost naked—look at Kintaro! All he's wearing is a tiny loincloth! The

Figure 3-3

Signs and symptoms of shock



FACE - PALE, DAZED LOOK
EYES - DULL, LACKLUSTER
PUPILS - DILATED
RESPIRATION - SHALLOW, LABORED, IRREGULAR
PULSE - RAPID, WEAK
SKIN - COLD, CLAMMY
PERSON MAY BE ANXIOUS, OR PARTIALLY OR TOTALLY UNCONSCIOUS,
DISORIENTED



Dazed look? Dilated pupils? Rapid pulse? It's simply the body's way of protecting itself against games like Deathtrap Dungeon, Tomb Raider 2 and Fighting Force. And while the victims of this kind of emotional shock may benefit from counseling or psychotherapy, what they usually need is more playing time.

EIDOS

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INTERFACE

bottom line is: Political correctness has gone way too far. Just lighten up!

Name withheld
Los Angeles, CA

The only reason Wolf Hawkfield has a nice physique is because he's been steadily working out over the years. Just look at how he looks now compared to his Virtua Fighter 1 days!



EGM TO THE RESCUE

Dear EGM,
My, um, friend is addicted to video games, and I was wondering if there are any numbers he could call for help. Please respond because I, er, I mean *he*, really needs help.

Brian Go
Bethel, CT

Well, well. It just so happens that we have a perfect solution for your "friend." How about a call to our new **EGM/EGM** help line, 1-800-PRE-VIEW? It's only \$1.95/min (and please make sure to get your parents' permission if you are under 18 years of age).

And thanks, by the way, for giving us an excuse for a shameless self-plug!

CLEARING THINGS UP

Dear EGM,
I would really appreciate it if you would put a glossary in your magazine (or more like a decoder). Just a random sampling from issue #97 netted me the following terms (and I don't have a clue what they mean, at least in reference to video games): AI, SGI, DVD, RPG, VGS, EDO, FPS, anime, sims and umlots. Also, what in the world is a Super Famicom?

John Sherrod
South Bend, IN

WTF? You don't know what VGS is? J/K. OK, we'll give you the 411 on some of these terms ASAP. IMO, we may have assumed a little too much. AI: artificial intelligence; SGI: Silicon Graphics, Inc.; DVD: digital video disc or digital versatile disc, depending on who you talk to; RPG: role-playing game; VGS: VideoGameSpot (www.videogamespot.com); EDO: extended data output (a faster type of RAM: random access memory); FPS: frames-per-second; anime: Japanese animation (or cartoons); sims: short for simulation (e.g. a flight sim is a game or program that simulates actual flight); and umlots: the two little dots above certain letters, like the a's in Teräs Käsi. BTW, the Super Famicom is the Japanese Super Nintendo (the Famicom is the Japanese NES).

YOU GO GIRL!

Dear EGM,
When I was reading Interface, I came across a letter that caught my interest. It was from C.D. Wasp and talked about the negative African-American stereotypes in Twisted Metal 2. I really didn't realize it at first, but I'm glad that C.D. pointed it out. Although the portrayals of Mike, Axel and Bruce weren't to everyone's taste, I have to congratulate the makers of TM2 for one thing: the positive portrayals of their female characters. Far too often in racing games and cartoons, girls are driving prissy pink cars and have names like Pink Powder Puff. To me, the real sexist games are those Barbie doll-types, like McKenzie and Co. (for the PC) or the Barbie and Crystal Pony games that were created for girls. Hopefully, we've seen the last of those monstrosities. I can find better games to play (like Resident Evil, TM2 or Tomb Raider) than those about a bunch of squeaky-clean preppy girls whose main goal is to get a guy to take them to the prom. I think a lot of girls would really enjoy video games if people would stop convincing them that the only things they should like are boys, clothes and make-up.

Carrie Kube
bkube@globaldiadialog.com

We always thought that McKenzie and Co. sounded like a lame premise for a game. But you know what? We're willing to pay just about anything to get our hands on the racing game that has Pink Powder Puff driving a prissy pink car!

COUNTDOWN TO ISSUE 100

THE QUESTION OF THE MOMENT:
What are your thoughts on Working Designs' announcement that they will stop publishing games for the Saturn? (See last month's issue, September #98, pg. 73 for details.)

Please send your thoughts via e-mail to: EGM_Mail@zd.com with the subject heading: Q of the Moment. We will print a few of your responses in next month's Letters Section. Due to press times and magazine shipping dates, we regretfully will not be able to print Question of the Moment responses sent to us by regular U.S. Postal service.

EGM LETTER ART

Where Creativity, Your Favorite Video Game and A Stamp Can Make You Immortal!



Baro Jung • Moreno Valley, CA

WINNER!

Congratulations Baro Jung (we bet you're thinking "It's about time I won first place!"). Your prize is on its way—an ASCII Specialized Control Pad for the PlayStation. It features rapid-fire controls for all buttons and slow motion for those intense moments.



Unnamed



Marques Cannon
Sarasota, FL



Jerod Quinn
Spokane, WA



Thinh Pham • San Jose, CA

Or at least get your name and work in the magazine and win yourself a game controller. (NEST FIGHT ON!)

The ASCII Control Pad

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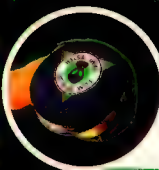
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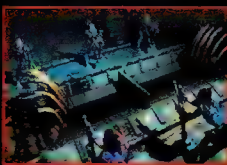
EGM²

Tips, Tricks and Strategies for Home and Arcade

October 1997

With Halloween just around the corner, we plan to put something *really* spooky in our issue. (No, not a picture of our staff!)

Rather, what better way to enjoy All Hallow's Eve than with a megablowout of the next Castlevania game for the PlayStation. We'll show you all the blood-curdling details of this gigantic game to get



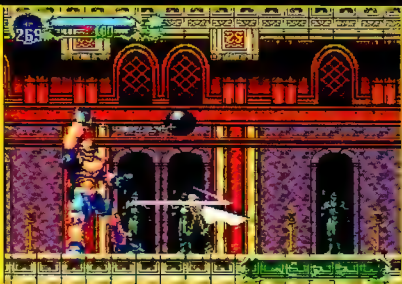
Abe's Oddworld's tough puzzles will melt your mind. We'll tell you how to avoid being lunch!

through both castle! Also, look for in-depth stats of everything from the creatures to the weapons.

EGM² then goes from the spooky to the strange with Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee. This unique title will certainly push your puzzle-solving skills to the limit as you help Abe rescue his slave friends. We'll help you figure out how to solve this game's most difficult puzzles.

As the leaves turn delicate colors and birds depart for warmer skies, a young man's fancy turns to one thing...sports games! In our next issue, we'll blow out the hottest pigskin games, plus take a look at other up-and-coming sports titles.

FEATURE STORY



Konami's hugely anticipated Castlevania: Symphony of the Night will certainly set the mood for an eerie Halloween! Look for a detailed walk-through, plus stats on all the weapons, monsters and much more.



Madden 98 is just one of the awesome pigskin titles that have us salivating as we prepare our next sports strategy guides.

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

Issue

100

November 1997

GET READY FOR THE BIG ONE!

This is what we've all been waiting for—the BIG one—issue 100! This is no ordinary issue, and we aren't kidding when we say this is the one you'll definitely want to buy! It's a whole new era for EGM, and we hope you'll be with us when it happens. Here's some of the exciting stuff you can look forward to in the best issue ever!

- A cooler, new look for EGM. You wanted it, you got it!
- The final piece of the 100th issue poster
- The top 100 games of all time
- And much, much, MUCH more!!!

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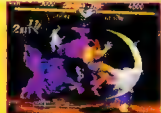
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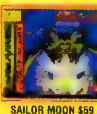
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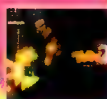
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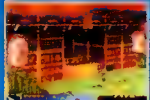


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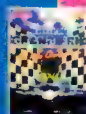
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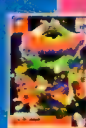
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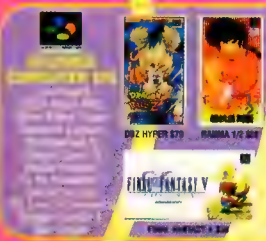
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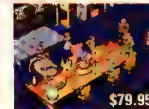








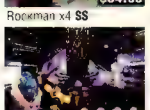


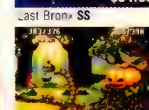


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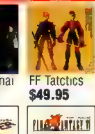
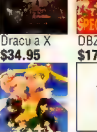













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